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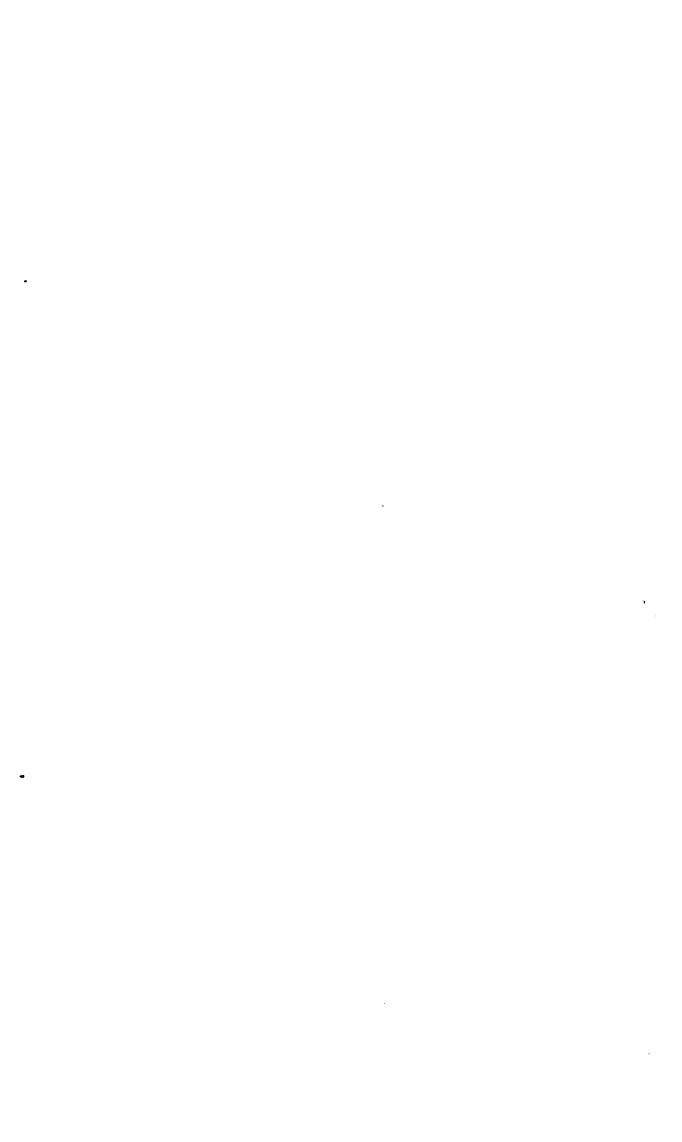
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THE
LETTERS
MARCUS TULLIUS CICERO
TO
SEVERAL OF HIS FRIENDS.

WITH REMARKS,
BY
WILLIAM MELMOTH, Esq.
IN FIVE VOLUMES.

— Quo fit ut omnis
Votiva pateat veluti descripta tabella
Vita senis. — HORAT.

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LETTERS
OF
MARCUS TULLIUS CICERO
TO
SEVERAL OF HIS FRIENDS.

BOOK THIRTEENTH—CONTINUED.

LETTER XI.

[A. U. 710.]

ASINIUS POLLIO* TO CICERO.

YOU must not wonder that you have heard nothing from me, in relation to public affairs, since

* Asinius Pollio was, in every respect, one of the most accomplished persons among his contemporaries. His extensive genius was equal to all the nobler branches of polite literature, and he gave the most applauded proofs of his talents as a poet, an orator, and an historian. He united the most lively and pleasing vein of wit and pleasantry, with all

the breaking out of the war. Our couriers have always found it difficult to pass unmolested through the forest of Castulo; * but it is now more than ever infested with robbers. These banditti, however, are by no means the principal obstruction to our intercourse with Rome, as the mails are perpetually searched and detained by the soldiers that are posted for that purpose, by both parties, in every quarter of the country. Accordingly, if I had not received letters by a ship, which lately arrived in this river, † I should have been utterly ignorant of

that strength and solidity of understanding which is necessary to render a man of weight in the more serious and important occasions of life; in allusion to which uncommon assemblage of qualities, it was said of him, that he was a man *omnium horarum*. It is to be regretted, that a character so truly brilliant on the intellectual side, should shine with less lustre in a moral view. It is evident, however, from the present epistle, that, in taking part with Cæsar against Pompey, private considerations were of more force with him than public utility, and determined him to support a cause which his heart condemned. This letter was written from the farther Spain; of which province, Cæsar, a short time before his death, had appointed Pollio governor.

* A city anciently of great note; at present it is only a small village, called *Cazorla*, in the province of New Castile, in Spain.

† The Guadalquivir, upon which the city of Corduba, from whence this letter is dated, was situated.

what has been transacted in your part of the world. But now that a communication by sea is thus opened between us, I shall frequently, and with great pleasure, embrace the opportunity of corresponding with you.

Believe me, there is no danger of my being influenced by the persuasions of the person you mention. * As much as the world abhors him, he is far from being detested to that degree which I know he deserves; and I have so strong an aversion to the man, that I would upon no consideration bear a part in any measures wherein he is concerned. † Inclined both by my temper and my studies to be the friend of tranquillity and freedom, I frequently and bitterly lamented our late unhappy civil wars. But as the formidable enemies which I had among both parties, rendered it altogether unsafe for me to remain neuter, so I would not take up arms on that side where I knew I should be perpetually ex-

* Antony, as Manutius conjectures, though some of the commentators, with greater probability, suppose that he means Lepidus.—*Vid. Epist. Famil. x. 11. & 15.*

† Nothing could be more insincere, it should seem, than these professions, as it is probable that Pollio was at this time determined to join Antony. It is certain, at least, that he did so soon afterwards, and carried with him the troops under his command.—*Patercul. ii. 63.*

posed to the insidious arts of my capital adversary.* But though my inclinations were not with the party I joined, my spirit, however, would not suffer me to stand undistinguished among them; in consequence of which, I was forward to engage in all the dangers of the cause I had espoused. With respect to Cæsar himself, I will confess, that I loved him with the highest and most inviolable affection; and, indeed, I had reason. For notwithstanding his acquaintance with me commenced so late as when he was in the height of his power, yet he admitted me into the same share of his friendship, as if I had been in the number of those with whom he had lived in the longest intimacy. Nevertheless, as often as I was at liberty to follow my own sentiments, I endeavoured that my conduct should be such as every honest man must approve; and whenever I was obliged to execute the orders I received, it was in a manner that evidently discovered how much my actions were at variance with my heart. The unjust odium, however, that I incurred by these unavoidable compliances, might well teach me the true value of liberty, and how wretched a condition

* The person hinted at is perhaps Cato; as Pollio had early distinguished his enmity towards that most illustrious of Romans, by a public impeachment. *Vid. Dial. de Caus. Corrupt. Eloquent. 34.*

it is to live under the government of a despotic power. If any attempts, therefore, are carrying on to reduce us a second time under the dominion of a single person, whoever that single person may be, I declare myself his irreconcilable enemy. The truth is, there is no danger so great, that I would not cheerfully hazard for the support of our common liberties. But the consuls have not thought proper to signify to me, either by any decree of the senate, or by their private letters, in what manner I should act in the present conjuncture. I have received, indeed, only one letter from Pansa, since the ides of March; by which he advised me to assure the senate, that I was ready to employ the forces under my command in any service they should require. But this would have been a very imprudent declaration at a time when Lepidus had professed, in his public speeches, as well as in the letters he wrote to all his friends, that he concurred in Antony's measures. For could I possibly, without the consent of the former, find means to subsist my army in their march through his provinces? But granting that I could have surmounted this difficulty, I must have conquered another and a still greater; as nothing less than a pair of wings could have rendered it practicable for me to have crossed the Alps, whilst every pass was guarded by the troops of Lepidus. Add to this, that I could by no

means convey any dispatches to Rome; as the couriers were not only exposed, in a thousand different places, to the danger of being plundered, but were detained likewise by the express orders of Lepidus.* It is well known, however, that I publicly declared at Córdoba, that it was my resolution not to resign this province into any other hands than those which the senate should appoint; not to mention how strenuously I withstood all the applications that were made to me for parting with the thirtieth legion. I could not, indeed, have given it up, without depriving myself of a very considerable strength for the defence of the republic; as there are no troops in the whole world, that are animated with a braver or more martial spirit than those of which this legion is composed. Upon the whole, I hope you will do me the justice to believe, in the first place, that I am extremely desirous of preserving the public tranquillity, as there is nothing I more sincerely wish than the safety of all my fellow-citizens; and, in the next place, that I am determined to vindicate my own and my country's rights.

It gives me greater satisfaction than you can well imagine, that you admit my friend into a

* Lepidus was governor of that part of Spain which lay nearest to Italy. See p. 12, note.

share of your intimacy. Shall I own, nevertheless, that I cannot think of him as the companion of your walks, and as bearing a part in the pleasantry of your conversation, without feeling some emotions of envy ! This is a privilege, believe me, which I infinitely value, as you shall most assuredly experience, by my devoting the whole of my time to your company, if ever we should live to see peace restored to the republic.

I am much surprised, that you did not mention in your letter, whether it would be most satisfactory to the senate, that I should remain in this province, or march into Italy. If I were to consider only my own ease and safety, I should certainly continue here ; but as, in the present conjuncture, the republic has more occasion for legions than for provinces, (especially as the loss of the latter may, with great ease, be recovered,) I have determined to move towards Italy with my troops. For the rest, I refer you to the letter I have written to Pansa, a copy of which I herewith transmit to you. Farewell.

Corduba, March the 16th.

LETTER XII.

[A. U. 710.]

TO CAIUS CASSIUS.

You will receive a full account of the present situation of affairs from Tadius Strabo, a person of great merit, and extremely well affected to the republic. Need I add how strong his attachment likewise is to yourself, when it thus evidently appears by his leaving his family and his fortunes in order to follow you? For the same reason, I forbear to solicit your good offices in his behalf, as I am persuaded you will think his coming to you a sufficient recommendation to your favour.

If any misfortune should attend our arms, be assured, that the friends of the republic have no other resource left than in you and Marcus Brutus. We are, at this juncture, indeed, in the most imminent danger, as it is with great difficulty that Decimus Brutus still holds out at Mutina. However, if he should be speedily relieved, we may look upon victory as our own; if not, let me repeat it again, every friend of liberty will fly for refuge to Brutus and to you. May you stand ready, then, with all that spirit which is necessary for the full and

complete deliverance of our distressed country!
Farewell.

LETTER XIII.

[A. U. 710.]

TO PLANCUS.

THE account that Furnius gave us of your disposition towards the republic, afforded the highest satisfaction, both to the senate and the people. But your letter, which was afterwards read in the senate, seemed by no means to comport with those sentiments our friend had thus represented you as entertaining. At the very time, indeed, when your illustrious colleague is sustaining a siege from the lawless crew of the most worthless villains, you do not scruple to advise us to peace. But if peace is their sincere desire, let them immediately lay down their arms, and sue for it in a proper manner, otherwise they must expect to obtain it, not by treaty, be assured, but by the sword alone. But I leave it to Furnius, and your worthy brother, to acquaint you with the reception which your letter upon this subject, as well as that of Lepidus, met with from the senate. Meanwhile, notwithstanding you are well qualified to be your own adviser, and that it

will soon be in your power likewise to have recourse to the faithful and friendly counsels of Furius and your brother; yet, in compliance with that affection to which you have so many powerful claims, I cannot forbear sending you a few admonitions. Believe me, then, my dear Plancus, whatever honours you have hitherto acquired, (and you have acquired, in truth, the highest,) they will be considered as so many vain and empty titles, unless you dignify them by joining in the defence, both of the liberties of the people, and the authority of the senate. Let me conjure you, therefore, to separate yourself from those associates with whom you have hitherto been united, not by choice, indeed, but by the general attraction of a prevailing party. It has been the fortune of many, as it will probably be yours, to exercise the supreme magistracy during times of public commotions; but not one of this number ever derived to himself that esteem and veneration which naturally flows from the consular dignity, who had not distinguished his administration by an active and zealous regard for the interests of the commonwealth. To this end, it is necessary, that you renounce the society of those impious citizens, whose principles are far different from your own; that you shew yourself the friend, the guide, and the protector, of all those

who are faithfully attached to our constitution ; and, in fine, that you be well persuaded, that the re-establishment of the public tranquillity consists not merely in laying down our arms, but in being secure from all reasonable apprehension of their ever being resumed to enslave us again. Thus to think, and thus to act, will render your character, both as a consul and a consular, most truly illustrious ; but if you should steer yourself by other maxims, and by other measures, you will possess those exalted distinctions, not only without honour, but with the utmost disgrace.

And now, if I have expressed my sentiments with somewhat more than ordinary seriousness, impute it to the zeal of my affection towards you ; assuring yourself, at the same time, that you will undoubtedly find my advice is founded on truth, if you make the experiment in a manner worthy of your character. Farewell.

March the 20th.

LETTER XIV.

[A. U. 710.]

TO LEPIDUS.*

THE singular regard I bear you renders it greatly my concern, that you should be distinguished

* Marcus Æmilius Lepidus was descended from one of the noblest and most ancient families in Rome; and he was himself distinguished with some of the most honourable posts in the republic. He stood high in the confidence and friendship of Julius Cæsar, who, when he was dictator, named him for the master of the horse; when he was consul, in the year 707, declared him his colleague; and who, a short time before his death, appointed him governor of the nearer Spain. One of the most elegant of the Roman historians has represented Lepidus as void of all military virtues, and, in every view of his character, as altogether unworthy of that high station to which fortune had exalted him. Accordingly, he is described by Shakespeare, in the tragedy of Julius Cæsar, as

———“A slight unmeritable man,
“Meet to be sent on errands.”

But though the poet has been strictly true to history, it may be questioned, perhaps, whether the historian has been equally faithful to truth: for, when one considers the great trust which Cæsar reposed in Lepidus; his address in pre-

with the highest dignities of the republic. I cannot, therefore, but regret, that you omitted to pay your acknowledgments to the senate for those extraordinary honours they lately conferred upon you.*

I am glad you are desirous of composing those unhappy dissensions that destroy the tranquillity of our country; and if you can effect this good work,

vailing with young Pompey, who had made himself master almost of all Spain, to renounce his conquests; together with the share he had in forming that celebrated league between Antony, Octavius, and himself, which gave him a third part in the division of the whole Roman dominions, is it credible, that his talents were destitute of lustre? History, perhaps, may be more reasonably relied upon in what it has delivered concerning his moral character; and it is probable, that Lepidus was strongly infected with avarice, ambition, and vanity. This, at least, is certain, that he acted towards the senate, in the present conjuncture, with great dissimulation and treachery. At the time when this letter was written, he was at the head of a very considerable army in the Narbonensian Gaul, which Cæsar had annexed to the province of Spain, in favour of Lepidus. *Pigh. Annal. ii. 451. Vel. Patercul. ii. 63. 80. Dio. xlv. 275.*

* The senate had lately decreed, that the statue of Lepidus should be erected in the forum, with an inscription, in honour of the services he had performed to his country, by prevailing with young Pompey to lay down his arms. *Philip. xvi. 4.*

consistently with the enjoyment of our liberties, it will be greatly to your own credit, as well as to the advantage of the commonwealth. But if the peace you propose is to re-establish a most oppressive tyranny, be well assured, there is not a man in his senses, who will not rather renounce his life than thus suffer himself to be made a slave. I should think, therefore, that your wisest way would be to avoid engaging as the mediator of a peace, which is neither approved by the senate, or the people, nor indeed by any lover of his country in the whole republic. But as this is a truth which you will undoubtedly learn from others, I will only add, that I hope you will consider, with your usual prudence, in what manner it will be best and most adviseable for you to act. Farewell.

LETTER XV.

[A. U. 710.]

TO CAIUS CASSIUS.

I WILL not tell you with how much zeal I lately stood forth, both in the senate, and before the people, an advocate for the advancement of your honours;* as it is a circumstance which I had ra-

* Dolabella having entered into Asia Minor, and com-

ther you should learn from the letters of your family than from my own hand. I should easily have carried my point in the former, if I had not met with a strenuous opposition from Pansa. Nevertheless, after having enforced my sentiments in the senate, I made a speech to the same purpose in an assembly of the people, to which I was introduced by Marcus Servilius, the tribune. I urged, upon this occasion, (and with a warmth and vehemence suitable to a popular audience,) all that I most justly might in your favour; and my speech was received with a louder and more universal applause than ever was known before. I hope you will pardon me, that I took these steps contrary to the persuasions of your mother-in-law, who was apprehensive they might give offence to Pansa. He did not, indeed, forget to avail himself of these fears; and he assured the people, that even your own family were

mitted great outrages and hostilities in that province, was declared, by a general vote of the senate, a public enemy; in consequence of which, a debate arose concerning the person to whom the war to be carried on against Dolabella should be entrusted. Cicero moved, that a commission should be granted to Cassius for that purpose, with the most honourable and extensive powers; but his motion was over-ruled by the superior interest of Pansa, who seems to have been secretly desirous of obtaining this command for himself. *Vid. Philip. xi.*

averse to my making this motion. I was by no means, I confess, governed by their sentiments in the case; as I acted entirely with a view to an interest which I have always endeavoured to promote; the interest, I mean, of the republic in general, as well as with a regard to the advancement of your glory in particular.

There is one article upon which I very largely expatiated in the senate, as I afterwards repeated it likewise in my speech to the people; and I hope your conduct will fully justify what I then said. I undertook to assure the public, that you would not wait for the sanction of our decrees; but, agreeably to your usual spirit, would, upon your own single authority, take such measures as should appear expedient to you for the defence of the commonwealth. I went even farther, and almost ventured to affirm, that you had already acted in this manner. The truth of it is, although I was not at that time certainly informed either in what part of the world you were, or what number of troops you were furnished with, yet I was confident, I said, that every legion in Asia* had submitted to your command; and that you had recovered that province to the republic. I have only to add my wishes, that, in every enterprise you shall undertake, you may

* Asia Minor.

still rise above yourself with superior glory! Farewell.

LETTER XVI.

[A. U. 710.]

PLANCUS TO CICERO.

I SHOULD employ this letter in giving you a full explanation of my measures, if I had no other method of convincing you, that I have, in every respect, conducted myself towards the republic agreeably to my own promises, and to your persuasions. I have ever been ambitious, indeed, of obtaining your esteem, as well as your friendship; and if I have wished to secure you for my advocate where I have acted wrong, I have been no less desirous of giving you occasion to applaud me for acting right. But I was going to say, that I shorten this letter for two reasons; the first is, because I have entered into an ample detail of every thing in my public manifesto;* and the next, because you will receive a circumstantial account of all that relates to me from Marcus Varisidius, a Roman knight, and my particular friend, whom I have directed to wait upon you. In the mean time, let me protest, that

* See the next Letter.

it was not without much concern, that I saw others anticipate me in the good opinion of the republic; but I forbore to declare myself, till I should be in a condition to effect something worthy of those expectations the senate has conceived of me, and of that high office * I shall shortly bear. And should fortune second my endeavours, I hope to render such considerable services to the republic, that not only the present age shall feel the advantage of my assistance, but that it shall be remembered likewise in times to come. Meanwhile, that I may pursue these endeavours with the greater alacrity, let me entreat your suffrage in procuring me those honours which your letter sets before my view as incitements of my patriotism; and your interest for this purpose is equal, I well know, to your inclination. Take care of your health, and give me your friendship in the same degree that I sincerely give you mine.

* The consulate, upon which Plancus was to enter the following year.

LETTER XVII.

[A. U. 710.]

PLANCUS, CONSUL ELECT, TO THE CONSULS, THE PRÆTORS, THE TRIBUNES, THE SENATE, AND THE COMMONS OF ROME.

BEFORE I make any professions with respect to my future conduct, I deem it necessary to justify myself to those who may think that I have held the republic too long in suspense concerning my designs.* For I would by no means have it imagined, that I am atoning for my past behaviour, when, in fact, I am only seizing the first favourable opportunity of publicly declaring a resolution which I have long formed. I was in no sort ignorant, however, that, at a time of such general and alarming confusions, a less deliberate discovery of my intentions would have proved most to my own private advantage; as I was sensible, that several of my fellow-citizens had been distinguished with great honours, by a more hasty explication of their purposes. But as fortune had placed me in such a situation, that I could not be earlier in testifying mine, without prejudicing that cause which I could

* See Vol. IV. p. 213, note.

better serve by concealing them, I was willing to suffer for a season in the good opinion of the world; as I preferred the interest of the public to that of my own reputation. That this was the genuine motive of my proceedings, cannot reasonably, I trust, be questioned. For can it be supposed, that a man in my prosperous circumstances, and of my well known course of life, whose utmost hopes too were upon the very point of being crowned,* could be capable either of meanly submitting to the destructive ambition of another, or impiously cherishing any dangerous schemes of his own? But it required some time, as well as much pains and expence, to render myself able to perform those assurances I purposed to give to the republic, and to every friend of her cause; that I might not approach with mere empty professions to the assistance of my country, but with the power of performing an effectual service. To this end, as the army under my command had been strongly and frequently solicited to revolt, it was necessary to persuade them, that a moderate reward, conferred by the general voice of the commonwealth, was far preferable to an infinitely greater from any single hand. My next labour was to convince those many

* Alluding to his being to enter the next year on the consular office.

cities which had been gained the last year by largesses, and other donations, that these were obligations of no validity; and that they should endeavour to obtain the same benefactions from a better and more honourable quarter. I had still the farther task to prevail with those, who commanded in the neighbouring provinces, to join with the more numerous party in a general association for the defence of our common liberties, rather than unite with the smaller number in hopes of dividing the spoils of a victory that must prove fatal to the whole world. Add to this, that I was obliged to augment my own troops and those of my auxiliaries, that I might have nothing to fear whenever I should think proper, contrary to the inclination of some about me, openly to avow the cause which it was my resolution to defend. Now, I shall never be ashamed to acknowledge, that, in order to bring these several schemes to bear, I submitted, though very unwillingly indeed, to the mortification of dissembling the intentions I really had, and of counterfeiting those which I certainly had not; as the fate of my colleague * had taught me how dangerous it is for a

* Decimus Brutus. To what particular circumstance of his conduct Plancus alludes, the history of these times does not discover. Perhaps he may only mean, in general, that Decimus had imprudently drawn upon himself the siege of

man, who means well to his country, to divulge his resolutions ere he is sufficiently prepared to carry them into execution. For this reason it was, that I directed my brave and worthy lieutenant, Caius Furnius, to represent to you, more fully than I thought prudent to explain in my dispatches, those measures which seemed necessary for the preservation both of this province, and of the republic in general, as being the more concealed method of conveying my sentiments to you upon that subject, as well as the safer with respect to myself.

It appears, then, that I have long been secretly attentive to the defence of the commonwealth. But now that, by the bounty of the gods, I am in every respect better prepared for that purpose, I desire to give the world, not only reason to hope well of my intentions, but clear and undoubted proofs of their sincerity.

I have five legions in readiness to march; all of them zealously attached to the republic, and disposed, by my liberalities, to pay an entire obedience to my orders. The same disposition appears in every city throughout this province; and they earnestly vie with each other in giving me the strongest marks of their duty. Accordingly, they have

Modena, before he had made the proper dispositions against an attack.

furnished me with as considerable a body of auxiliary forces, both horse and foot, as they could possibly have raised for the support of their own national liberties. As for myself, I am ready either to remain here, in order to protect this province, or to march wheresoever else the republic shall demand my services. I will offer yet another alternative; and either resign my troops and government into any hands that shall be appointed, or draw upon myself the whole weight of the war; if, by these means, I may be able to establish the tranquillity of my country, or even retard those calamities with which it is threatened.

If at the time that I am making these declarations, our public disturbances should happily be composed, I shall rejoice in an event so advantageous to the commonwealth, notwithstanding the honour I shall lose by being too late in the tender of my services.* But, on the contrary, if I am early enough in my offers to bear a full part in all the dangers of the war, let me recommend it to every man of justice and candour to vindicate me against

* This passage sufficiently discovers the true motive of Plancus's present declarations; as they appear evidently to have flowed from some reason he had to believe, that the contest between Antony and the senate was likely to be adjusted in an amicable manner.

the malevolence of those whom envy may prompt to asperse my character.

In my own particular, I desire no greater reward for my services than the satisfaction of having contributed to the security of the republic. But I think myself bound to recommend those brave and worthy men to your especial favour, who, partly in compliance with my persuasions, but much more in confidence of your good faith, would not suffer themselves to be prevailed upon by all the applications that have been made both to their hopes and their fears, to depart from their duty to the commonwealth.

LETTER XVIII.

[A. U. 710.]

TO PLANCUS.

ALTHOUGH I had received a very full account from our friend Furnius of your disposition with regard to the republic, and of the measures you were meditating in its defence, yet the perusal of your letter * afforded me a still clearer view into the whole plan of your patriot purposes. Notwithstanding, then, that you should not have an oppor-

* The foregoing letter to the senate.

tunity of executing your projected services, as the fate of the commonwealth, which depends upon a single battle, will probably be decided ere this reaches your hands; yet you have acquired, nevertheless, great and universal applause from what the world has been informed of your general good intentions. Accordingly, had either of the consuls been in Rome* when your dispatches arrived, the senate would have declared, and in terms, I am persuaded, extremely to your advantage, the sense it entertains of your zealous and acceptable preparations in their cause. The proper season, however, for your being rewarded with honours of this kind, is, in my opinion, at least, so far from being elapsed, that, on the contrary, it seems to be scarce fully arrived; as those distinctions, alone, appear to me to deserve the name of honours that are conferred by our country, not in expectation of services to come, but in just retribution to those that have effectually been performed. Believe me, if any form of government shall subsist amongst us where merit can hope to be distinguished, you will shine out with all the most illustrious dignities it

* "The two consuls, Hirtius and Pansa, were both in Gaul, and waiting to attempt a decisive battle with Antony, in order to deliver Decimus Brutus from the danger he was in at Modena.—*Mr Ross.*

can bestow. But nothing of this kind (let me repeat it again) can justly be called an honour, but what is given, not as the incentive of an occasional service, but as the recompence of a constant and uniform course of patriotism. Be it then your earnest endeavour, my dear Plancus, to acquire these well-merited rewards, by advancing to the relief of your colleague;* by improving that wonderful unanimity which appears in every province for the support of the common cause; and by giving all possible succour to your country in general. Be persuaded, that I shall always be ready to assist your schemes with my best advice, and to promote your honours with my utmost interest; in a word, that I shall act, upon every occasion, wherein you are concerned, as one who is most sincerely and most warmly your friend. I am so, indeed, not only from that intercourse of affectionate good offices by which we have been long mutually united, but from the love I bear likewise to my country; in tenderness to which, I am more anxious for your life than for my own. Farewell.

March the 30th.

* Decimus Brutus.

LETTER XIX.

[A. U. 710.]

TO CORNIFICIUS.

I AGREE with you in thinking, that those who were concerned in the design upon Lilybæum,* deserved to have been executed upon the spot. But you spared them, it seems, in the apprehension, that the world would condemn you as too freely indulging a vindictive spirit; yet, as well might you have been apprehensive, my friend, that the world would condemn you for acting too agreeably to your patriot character.

I very gladly embrace your overtures of renewing that association with you for the defence of the republic, in which I was formerly engaged with your father; and I am persuaded, it is an association, my dear Cornificius, in which we shall ever be united. It is with much pleasure, likewise, that I find you esteem it unnecessary to send me any ceremonious acknowledgments of my services; for-

* A city in Sicily, opposite to the coast of Lybia in Africa. The particulars of the affair alluded to, as well as the persons concerned in it, are unknown.

malities, indeed, would ill agree with that intimacy which subsists between us.

If the senate were ever holden in the absence of the consuls, unless upon some very sudden and extraordinary occasion, it would have been more frequently summoned in order to concert proper measures for the support of your authority. But as neither Hirtius nor Pansa are in Rome, no decree can at present be procured in relation to the several sums of two millions,* and of seventy millions † of sesterces, which you mention. I think, however, that you are sufficiently authorized to raise this money by way of loan, in virtue of that general decree of the senate by which you were confirmed in your government.

I imagine you are informed of the state of our affairs, by those to whom it properly belongs to send you the intelligence. As for myself, I conceive great hopes †hat things will take a favourable turn. I am not wanting, at least, in my utmost vigilance and efforts for that purpose; and I am resolutely waging war against every foe to the republic. The recovery of our liberties does not seem indeed, even *now*, to be a matter of great difficul-

* About 16,000*l.* of our money.

† About 560,000*l.*

ty ; I am sure it would have been perfectly easy if some persons had acted in the manner they ought. Farewell.

LETTER XX.

[A. U. 710.]

TO PLANCUS.

It is principally for the sake of my country, that I ought to rejoice in the very powerful succours with which you have strengthened the republic, at a juncture when it is well-nigh reduced to the last extremity. I protest, however, by all my hopes of congratulating you on the victorious deliverance of the commonwealth, that a considerable part of the joy which I feel upon this occasion arises from the share I take in your glory. Great, indeed, is the reputation you have already acquired, and great, I am persuaded, will be the honours that will hereafter be conferred upon you ; for assure yourself, nothing could make stronger impression upon the senate than your late letter* to that assembly. It did so, both with respect to those very important

* The letter here mentioned seems to have been a subsequent one to that which stands the 17th in the present Book.

services which it brought us an account that you had performed, and with regard to that strength of sentiment and expression with which it was drawn up. It contained nothing, however, that was in the least unexpected to myself; as I was not only perfectly well acquainted with your heart, and had not forgotten the promises you had given me in your letters, but as I had received from Furnius a full information of all your designs. These, indeed, appeared to the senate much beyond what they had allowed themselves to hope; not that they ever entertained the least doubt of your disposition, but because they were by no means sufficiently apprised either of what you were in a condition to effect, or whither you purposed to march. It was with infinite pleasure, therefore, that I read the letter which Marcus Varisidius delivered to me on your part. I received it on the 7th of this month, in the morning, amidst a large circle of very worthy citizens, who were attending in order to conduct me from my house; and I immediately gave them a share in my joy. Whilst we were mutually congratulating each other upon this happy occurrence, Munatius came to pay me his usual morning visit; to whom I likewise communicated your letter. It was the first notice he had received of an express being arrived from you; as Varisidius, in pursuance of your directions, did not deliver any of

his dispatches till he had first waited upon me. A short time, however, after Munatius had left me, he returned with your letter to himself, together also with that which you wrote to the senate. We thought proper to carry the latter immediately to Cornutus ; who, as prætor of the city, supplies the office of the consuls in their absence, agreeably, you know, to an ancient and established custom. The senate was instantly summoned ; and the expectation that was raised by the general report of an express being arrived from you, brought together a very full assembly. As soon as your letter was read, it was objected, that Cornutus had not taken the auspices in a proper manner ; and this scruple was confirmed by the general sentiments of our college. * In consequence of this, the senate was adjourned to the following day ; when I had a very warm contest with Servilius, who strenuously opposed the passing of any decree to your honour. For this purpose he had the interest to procure his own motion to be first proposed to the senate ; † which

* See Vol. I. p. 295, note.

† The senate could not enter into any debate, unless the subject of it was proposed to them in form by some of the magistrates ; who had the sole privilege of referring any question to a vote, or of dividing the house upon it. *Midlet. on the Rom. S.* p. 155.

being rejected, however, by a great majority, mine was next taken into consideration. But when the senate had unanimously agreed to it, Publius Titius,* at the instigation of Servilius, interposed his negative. The farther deliberation upon this affair was postponed, therefore, to the next day; when Servilius came prepared to support an opposition, which, in some sort, might be considered as injurious to the honour even of Jupiter himself; as it was in the Capitol† that the senate, upon this occasion, was assembled. I leave it to your other friends to inform you in what manner I mortified Servilius, and with how much warmth I exposed the contemptible interposition of Titius. But this

* One of the tribunes. It has already been observed, that those magistrates had a power of putting a stop to the proceedings of the senate by their single negative.

† The Capitol was a temple dedicated to Jupiter, and the most considerable structure of the sacred kind in all Rome. The ruins of this celebrated edifice are still to be seen. None of the commentators have taken notice of the indirect compliment which Cicero here pays to Plancus; which seems, however, to deserve a particular explanation. The Capitol was held in singular veneration, as being built upon the spot which Jupiter was supposed to have chosen for the visible manifestation of his person. In consequence of this popular superstition, both Horace and Virgil often speak of the prosperity and duration of the Capitol, as a cir-

I will myself assure you, that the senate could not possibly act with greater dignity and spirit, or show a stronger disposition to advance your honours, than it discovered upon this occasion. Nor are you less in favour with the whole city in general; as indeed all orders and degrees of men amongst us remarkably concur in the same common zeal for the deliverance of the republic. Persevere then, my friend, in the glorious course upon which you have

cumstance upon which the fortune of the whole empire depended :—

————— *Stet Capitolium*
Fulgens, triumphatisque possit
Roma ferox dare jura medis.

HOR. Od. iii. 3. 42.

Dum domus Ænci Capitoli immobile saxum
Accolet, imperiumque Pater Romanus habebit.

ÆN. ix. 448.

Cicero, therefore, by a very artful piece of flattery, insinuates, that the opposition Servilius made to the honours which the senate intended to have paid to Plançus, was, in effect, an affront to that supreme and guardian divinity, in whose temple the transaction passed, as being contrary to the interest of a republic which was distinguished by Jupiter himself with his immediate presence.—*Vid. Æn. viii. 346.*

entered ; and let nothing less than immortal fame be the object of your well-directed ambition.— Despise the false splendour of all those empty honours that are short-lived, transitory, and perishable. True glory is founded upon virtue alone ; which is never so illustriously distinguished as when it displays itself by important services to our country. You have at this time a most favourable opportunity for that purpose ; which, as you have already embraced, let it not slip out of your hands till you shall have employed it to full advantage ; lest it be said, that you are more obliged to the republic than the republic is obliged to you. As for my own part, you will always find me ready to contribute to the advancement, as well as to the support, of your dignities ; indeed, it is what I owe not only to our friendship, but to the commonwealth, which is far dearer to me than life itself.

Whilst I was employing my best services for the promotion of your honours, I received great pleasure in observing the prudence and fidelity which Titus Munatius exerted for the same purpose. I had experienced those qualities in him upon other occasions ; but the incredible diligence and affection with which he acted for your interest in this affair, showed them to me in a still stronger and more conspicuous point of view. Farewell.

April the 11th.

LETTER XXI.

[A. U. 710.]

TO CORNIFICIUS.

My friendship with Lucius Lamia is well known, I am persuaded, not only to yourself, who are acquainted with all the circumstances of my life, but to every Roman in general. It most conspicuously appeared, indeed, to the whole world, when he was banished by the consul Gabinius, * for having, with so remarkable a spirit of freedom and fortitude, risen up in my defence.† Our friendship, however, did not commence from that period; it was from an affection of a much earlier date, that he was induced thus generously to expose himself to every danger in my cause. To these his meritorious services, I must add, that there is no man whose company affords me a more true and exquisite entertainment. After what I have thus said, you will think it needless, surely, that I should use much rhetoric in recommending him to your favour. You see the just reason I have for giving him so large a share of my affection: whatever

* See Vol. I. p. 185. note.

† When Cicero was persecuted by Clodius.

terms, therefore, the strongest friendship can require upon an occasion of this nature, let your imagination supply for me in the present. I will only assure you, that your good offices to the agents, the servants, and the family of Lamia, in every article wherein his affairs in your province shall require them, will be a more acceptable instance of your generosity, than any you could confer in my own personal concerns. I am persuaded, indeed, from your great penetration into the characters of men, that, without my recommendation, you would be perfectly well-disposed to give him your best assistance. I must confess, at the same time, I have heard that you suspect him of having signed some decree of the senate injurious to your honour. But I must assure you, in the first place, that he never signed any during the administration of those consuls; * and, in the next, that almost all the decrees which were pretended to be passed at that time, were absolutely forged. The truth is, you might just as reasonably suppose I was concerned in that decree, to which my name was subscribed, relating to Sempronius; though, in fact, I was then absent from Rome, and complained, I remember, of the injury that had been done me, in a letter which I

* It is altogether uncertain to what consuls Cicero alludes; Manutius supposes, to Antony and Dolabella.

wrote to you upon the occasion. But, not to enter farther into this subject; I most earnestly entreat you, my dear Cornificius, to consider the interest of Lamia, in all respects, as mine, and to let him see that my recommendation has proved of singular advantage to his affairs; assuring yourself, that you cannot, in any instance, more effectually oblige me. Farewell.

LETTER XXII.

[A. U. 710.]

TO THE SAME.

CORNIFICIUS delivered your letter to me on the 17th of March, about three weeks, as he told me, after he had received it from your hands. The senate did not assemble either on that day, or the next; however, on the 9th they met, when I defended your cause in a very full house, and with no unpropitious regards from Minerva.* I may with peculiar propriety say so, as the statue of that guardian goddess of Rome, which I formerly erect-

* It was a sort of proverbial expression among the Romans, when they spoke of any successful undertaking, to say, that it was carried on "not without the approbation of Minerva."

ed in the Capitol,* and which had lately been thrown down by an high wind, was, at the same time, decreed to be replaced. Your letter, which Pansa read to the senate, was much approved, and afforded great satisfaction to the whole assembly. It fired them, at the same time, with general indignation against the impudent attempts of the horrid *Minotaur*, for so I may well call those combined adversaries of yours, Calvisius and Taurus.† It was proposed, therefore, that the censure of the senate should pass upon them; but that motion was overruled by the more merciful Pansa. However, a decree was voted upon this occasion extremely to your honour.

As for my own good offices in your favour, be assured, my dear Cornificius, they have not been wanting, from the first moment I conceived a hope

* "Cicero, a little before his retreat into banishment, took a small statue of Minerva, which had long been revered in his family as a kind of tutelar deity, and carrying it to the Capitol, placed it in the temple of Jupiter, under the title of *Minerva, the Guardian of the City*." *Life of Cic.* i. 350.

† The Minotaur was a fabulous monster, which the poets describe as half man half bull. Cicero, therefore, in allusion to the name of Taurus, who had joined with Calvisius in some combination against Cornificius, jocosely gives them the appellation of the Minotaur.

of recovering our liberties. Accordingly, when I laid a foundation, for that purpose, on the 20th of December last,* while the rest of those who ought to have been equally forward in that work, stood timidly hesitating in what manner to act, I had a particular view to the preserving you in your present post; and to this end, I prevailed with the senate to agree to my motion concerning the continuance of the proconsuls in their respective provinces. But my zeal in your cause did not terminate here, and I still continued my attacks upon that person, who, in contempt of the senate, as well as most injuriously to you, had, even whilst he himself was absent from Rome, procured your government to be allotted to him. My frequent, or, to speak more properly, my incessant, remonstrances against his proceedings, forced him, much against his inclinations, to enter Rome, where he found himself obliged to relinquish the hopes of an honour which he thought himself no less sure of, than if it had been in his actual possession. It gives me great pleasure, that these my just and honest invectives against your adversary, in conjunction with

* When he spoke his third and fourth Philippic orations, wherein Cicero endeavoured, amongst other articles, to animate the senate and the people to vigorous measures against Antony.

your own exalted merit, have secured you in your government, as I rejoice extremely likewise in the distinguished honours you have there received.

I very readily admit of your excuse, in regard to Sempronius, well knowing, that your conduct upon that occasion may justly be imputed to those errors to which we were all equally liable, whilst we trode the dark and dubious paths of bondage. I myself, indeed, the grave inspirer of your counsels, and the firm defender of your dignities, even I, my friend, was injudiciously hurried away by my indignation at the times, when, too hastily despairing of liberty, I attempted to retire into Greece.* But the Etesian winds, like so many patriot-citizens, refused to waft me from the commonwealth, whilst Auster, conspiring in their designs, collected his whole force, and drove me back again to Rhegium. From thence I returned to Rome, with all the expedition that sails and oars could speed me; and the very next day after my arrival, I shewed the world, that I was the only man, amidst a race of the most abject slaves, that dared to assert his freedom and independency.† I inveighed, indeed, against the

* An account of this intended voyage has already been given in a former note. See Vol. IV. p. 214, note.

† This seems to allude to his having refused to pay obedience to a summons from Antony to attend a meeting of

measures of Antony with so much spirit and indignation, that he lost all manner of patience; and pointing the whole rage of his Bacchanalian fury at my devoted head, he at first endeavoured to gain a pretence of assassinating me in the senate. But that project not succeeding, his next resource was to lay wait for my life in private. But I extricated myself from his insidious snares, and drove him, all reeking with the fumes of his nauseous intemperance, into the toils of Octavius.* That ex-

the senate, which was held on that day. See Vol. IV. p. 222, note.

* Octavius, as soon as he returned into Italy, after the death of Cæsar, endeavoured to secure Cicero in his interest, as Cicero appeared no less forward to embrace the friendship of Octavius. They both of them, indeed, had one of the strongest of all motives, perhaps, for a mutual coalition; as there is nothing in which men seem to unite more amicably than in hunting down the same common foe. The league, however, into which Cicero entered with Octavius, extended no farther, at first, than to a matter of mere civil controversy; and he only engaged to support Octavius in his claim of part of Cæsar's estate, which Antony, it was alleged, injuriously withheld from him. But even this was going a greater length than a true patriot could prudently have ventured; for though the contest between Antony and Octavius, with respect to the money in question, was altogether personal, yet, "by natural consequence, (as the accurate Observer, upon the Epistles be-

cellent youth drew together a body of troops, in the first place, for his own and my particular defence, and in the next, for that of the republic in

tween Cicero and Brutus, justly remarks,) it became a matter of more extensive concern. In the first place, it was joined with the succession to the name of Cæsar; which was looked upon by the chiefs of the Cæsarian party as an earnest of the continuance of the public settlement made by Cæsar in the person of Octavius; and on the same account, it was always suspected by the more discerning republicans. In the next place, it gave Octavius the plausible occasion of being the distinguished assertor of Cæsar's acts, and of the full execution of all his bequests; by which means, he drew upon himself the eyes of all the veterans, the military force of the empire, and interested the whole populace of Rome in his cause; since it was the common cause of all who were expecting, with impatience, the effect of Cæsar's liberality." However, had Cicero's engagements with Octavius ended here, his conduct might have been excused at least, though it certainly could not have been justified. But when he afterwards armed Octavius with the power and the dignities of the state; when he trusted (as the excellent author of the *Observations on his Life* ingeniously expresses it) *the last stake of liberty in the hands of a man who had so great temptations to betray it*, he seems clearly to have acted in contradiction to the sentiments of his heart, and to have sacrificed the cause of the republic to the hatred he bore to Antony. Plutarch expressly assigns this as Cicero's motive for declaring in favour of Octavius, which indeed is abundantly confirmed by his letters to Atticus. It appears from these, that there was so little dif-

general; which, if he had not happily raised, Antony, in his return from Brundisium, would have spread desolation, like a wasting pestilence, around the land. What followed I need not add, as I imagine you are well apprised of all that has happened subsequent to that period. To return, then, to what gave occasion to this digression, let me again assure you, that I am perfectly well satisfied with your excuse concerning Sempronius. The truth is, it was impossible to act with any determined steadiness and uniformity in times of such total anarchy and confusion. "But other days (to use an expression of Terence) are now arrived, and other measures are now required." Come then, my friend, let us sail forth together, and even take our place at the helm. All the advocates of liberty are embarked in one common bottom; and it is my utmost endeavour to steer them right. May pros-

ference, with respect to the republican interest, whether Antony or Octavius was at the head of affairs, that neither Atticus nor Cicero could determine, in that view, which to prefer:—*Valde tibi essentior*, (says our author to his friend) *si multum possit Octavianus, multo firmitus acta tyranni comprobatum iri, quam in telluris: atque id contra Brutum fieri. Sin autem vincitur, vides intolerabilem Antonium, ut quem velis nescias.* Ad Att. xvi. 14. Plut. in Brut. Tunstal's Observ. on the Epist. between Brut. and Cic. p. 132. Observ. on the Life of Cic. p. 50.

perous gales, then, attend our voyage! But whatever winds may arise, my best skill most assuredly shall not be wanting: and is it in the power of patriotism to be answerable for more? In the mean time, let it be your care to cherish in your breast every generous and exalted sentiment; remembering always, that your true glory must ever be inseparably connected with the republic. Farewell.

LETTERS
OF
MARCUS TULLIUS CICERO
TO
SEVERAL OF HIS FRIENDS.

BOOK FOURTEENTH.

LETTER I.

[A. U. 710.]

GALBA* TO CICERO.

ON the 15th of this month, the day on which Pansa intended to join the army of Hirtius, Antony drew out of his lines the second and thirty-fifth legions, together with his own prætorian cohort, and

* He had been one of Cæsar's lieutenants in Gaul ; but not being favoured by him in his pursuit of the consulship, he joined in the conspiracy with Brutus and Cassius. He was great grandfather to the emperor Galba. *Quartier.*

that of Silanus; * both which were composed of the *Evocati*.† I happened, at this time, to be in Pansa's army, having been sent an hundred miles express, in order to hasten his march. Antony advanced towards us with these troops, in the supposition that our forces consisted only of four new raised legions; whereas Hirtius, the better to secure our junction, had taken advantage of the preceding night to reinforce us with the *martial* legion, which I generally commanded, as also with two prætorian cohorts. These regiments, upon the very first appearance of Antony's cavalry, could by no means be restrained from engaging; so that we were under an absolute necessity of following them to the charge. Antony, in order to deceive us into a belief that none of his legions were with him, had posted them at Forum Gallorum, ‡ and only appeared with his horse and light-armed troops in view. Pansa, when he saw that, contrary to his inclination, the *martial* legion had rushed on to the attack, gave directions, that two of his new raised legions,

* He was military tribune in the army of Lepidus, and, by the secret connivance, if not by the express orders, of that general, had conducted a body of troops to the assistance of Antony, in the siege of Modena. *Dio*. xlv. p. 336.

† See Vol. II. p. 54, note.

‡ Now called Castel-Franco, a small village on the Æmilian way, between Modena and Bologna.

which were behind, should immediately come up. As soon as we had passed the woods, and a morass, we formed in order of battle with twelve cohorts;* the other two legions, I just now mentioned, not being yet arrived. Antony observing this, drew all his forces out of the village, and instantly began the engagement. Both sides maintained the first onset with the most obstinate bravery; though, indeed, our right wing, in which I commanded eight cohorts of the *martial* legion, at the very beginning of the action, repulsed Antony's thirty-fifth legion, and pursued them above * * * * † paces out of the field. But I no sooner observed the enemy's cavalry attempting to surround the wing, from which I had advanced, than I endeavoured to rejoin it; ordering, at the same time, my light armed troops to engage Antony's moorish horse, lest they should fall upon us in our rear. But whilst I was attempting to regain my post, I found myself in the midst of the enemy's troops, and perceived Antony himself at a small distance behind me. Upon this, throwing my shield cross my shoulders, I galloped full speed towards one of our new raised legions, which I saw

* A cohort consisted of about 400 or 500 men.

† “ The common editions add here *quingentos*; but it is not found either in Dr Meads' MS., or any other authority.” *Mr Ross*.

advancing from the camp ; the enemy, at the same time, pursuing me on the one side, and our own men aiming their pikes at me on the other ; but as the latter soon discovered who I was, I had the very extraordinary good fortune to escape. Cæsar's prætorian cohort,* which was posted on the Æmilian road, made a very long and vigorous resistance. But our left wing, in which were two cohorts of the martial legion, together with the prætorian cohort, and which formed indeed the weakest division of our army, began to give ground, being hemmed in by Antony's cavalry, in which he is extremely strong. As soon as our troops had made good their retreat, I began to think of mine, and was the last that entered our camp. Antony, considering himself as master of the field, imagined he could likewise take possession of our camp ; but after an unsuccessful attempt, he retired with great loss.

As soon as Hirtius was informed of what had passed, he put himself at the head of twenty veteran cohorts, and meeting Antony, in his return from the attack of our camp, engaged him upon the very spot where our action had just before happened, and entirely defeated his army. About ten o'clock that night, Antony, with his cavalry, regained his camp near Mutina, as Hirtius retired to that which

* Octavius.

Pansa had quitted in the morning, and in which he had left the two legions that repulsed Antony.

The enemy have lost the greatest part of their veteran troops. But this advantage was not to be obtained without a loss likewise on our side; the prætorian cohorts, together with the martial legion, having somewhat suffered in this action.* We have taken two legionary standards,* together with sixty others, and, upon the whole, have gained a very considerable victory. Farewell.

From the camp, April the 20th.

LETTER II.

[A. U. 710.]

PLANCUS TO CICERO.†

It affords me great pleasure to reflect, that I have amply justified your favourable representations of me, by having strictly fulfilled the promises I made

* Each legion had a chief standard carried before it, upon which was fixed the figure of an eagle. There was a particular one likewise to every company.

† When Plancus wrote this letter, he had not received advice of the action between the troops of Antony and those of the republic, of which an account has been given in the preceding epistle.

you. I give you a proof likewise of my particular affection, by acquainting you, before any other of my friends, with the measures I have taken. I hope you are well persuaded, that the republic will daily receive still stronger instances of my attachment; let me assure you, at least, that you shall be more and more convinced of it by the clearest and most unquestionable evidence. As to what concerns my own personal interest, I protest to you, my dear Cicero, by all my hopes of rescuing the republic from those imminent dangers to which it is exposed, that notwithstanding I esteem those illustrious recompences, which are conferred by the senate, as no less desirable than immortal fame, yet, believe me, I shall not in the least remit of my earnest endeavours to assist the commonwealth, although I should never participate of its glorious rewards. If the ardour and efficacy of my zeal should not distinguish me, amidst those many excellent citizens who stand forth in the defence of our country, let not your suffrage contribute to the increase of my honours. I have no ambition inconsistent with that general equality, for which I have taken up arms, and am perfectly well contented to leave it to your own determination, both when, and in what manner, my services shall be recompensed. Nothing, indeed, can be deemed too late,

or too inconsiderable, which is given to a man as a public testimony of his country's approbation.

Having reached the Rhone, by long marches, I passed that river with my whole army, on the 27th of April, and immediately ordered a detachment of a thousand horse to advance before me, from Vienna,* by a shorter road. If I meet with no obstructions on the part of Lepidus, I doubt not of giving the republic reason to be satisfied with my diligence and expedition; but if he should attempt to intercept my passage, I must take my measures as circumstances shall require. Of this, however, I will now assure you, that the army I am conducting is highly respectable, whether considered with regard to the nature, the number, or the fidelity of my troops. I will only add, that I desire your friendship upon no other terms than as you are sure I shall always give you the warmest returns of mine. Farewell.

* It is now called Vienne, a city in the province of Dauphiny, situated upon the Rhone.

LETTER III.

[A. U. 710.]

DECIMUS BRUTUS TO CICERO.

You are sensible how great a loss the republic has sustained by the death of Pansa.* It behoves you, therefore, to exert all your credit and address to prevent our enemies from entertaining any reasonable hope of recovering their strength, now that they have thus deprived us of both our consuls.† I

* Pansa died at Bologna, a few days after the battle of Mutina, of the wounds he received in that action. *Appian*. iii. p. 572.

† Hirtius and Octavius, after the battle mentioned in the preceding note, "were determined, at all hazards, to relieve Modena; and after two or three days spent in finding the most likely place of breaking through the entrenchments, they made their attack with such vigour, that Antony, rather than suffer the town to be snatched at last out of his hands, chose to draw out his legions, and come to a general battle. The fight was bloody and obstinate; and Antony's men, though obliged to give ground, bravely disputed every inch of it, till Decimus Brutus, taking the opportunity at the same time to sally out of the town, at the head of his garrison, helped greatly to determine and complete the victory. Hirtius pushed his advantage with great spirit, and forced his way into Antony's camp; but when

am preparing to pursue Antony immediately; and, I trust, shall be able to render it impossible either for Antony to continue in Italy, or for Ventidius* to escape out of it.

he had gained the middle of it, was unfortunately killed near the general's tent." *Life of Cic.* iii. 204.

* Ventidius was a soldier of fortune, who, from the meanest original, became one of the most distinguished captains of the age. The father of Pompey, having taken the city of Ascalum, in the Italic, or social war, reserved part of the inhabitants to grace his triumphal entry into Rome; among which was the mother of Ventidius, who walked before the victor's car with her infant son at her breast. When he grew up, he gained his livelihood by serving as a groom; in which employment, having gotten together a little money, he furnished himself with some mules and carriages, which he let out to the government for the use of the proconsuls, in their way to the provinces. In this capacity, he became known to Cæsar, who, observing in him a genius much superior to his station, took him into Gaul, where he advanced him in his army; and after the civil wars were ended, gave him a place in the senate, and created him prætor. After the death of Cæsar, he attached himself to the interest of Antony, to whose assistance he was at this time marching, at the head of a considerable body of troops, which he had raised out of Cæsar's veteran legions that were dispersed in different parts of Italy. Towards the end of the present year, the triumvirate appointed him consul. Having shortly afterwards obtained a signal victory over the Parthians, his conduct and bravery were rewarded with a triumph; and, to crown the series of

As I suppose you see very clearly the measures which Pollio will pursue, I need say nothing to you upon that article. But I make it my first and principal request, that you would send to Lepidus, in order, if possible, to prevent that light and inconstant man from renewing the war, by joining with Antony; as both Lepidus and Pollio are at the head of very numerous and powerful armies. I do not mention this as imagining that you are not equally attentive to these important points; but from the firm persuasion that Lepidus, however dubious it may perhaps appear to the senate, will never of himself act in the manner he ought. Let me entreat you, likewise, to confirm Plancus in his present resolutions; who, I should hope, when he sees Antony driven out of Italy, will not be wanting in his assistance to the republic. If the latter should have crossed the Alps, I purpose to post a proper number of forces to guard the passes of those mountains;* and you may depend upon my

his glory, he was honoured at his death with a public funeral. *Aul. Gel.* xv. 4. *Dio.* xliii. p. 239. *Vel. Paterc.* ii. 65.

* The intent of this guard seems to have been what Mr Ross conjectures, in order to intercept the march of Ventidius, and prevent him from following Antony over the Alps.

giving you regular notice of all my motions. Farewell.

From my camp at Regium,*

April the 29th.

LETTER IV.

[A. U. 710.]

TO PLANCUS.

How pleasing was the letter I received from you two days before our victory at Mutina ! wherein you gave me an account of the state of your troops, of your zeal to the republic, and of the expedition with which you were advancing to the relief of Brutus. But, notwithstanding that the enemy was defeated before you could join our army, the hopes, nevertheless, of the commonwealth, are still fixed entirely upon you ; as the principal leaders of these infamous rebels have escaped, it is said, from the field of battle. You will remember, therefore, that to exterminate the remains of this party, will be a service no less acceptable to the senate, than if you had given them the first repulse.

I am waiting, as well as many others, with great

* A town upon the Æmilian way, between Modena and Parma. It is now called Reggio.

impatience for the return of your couriers. I hope that our late success will now induce even Lepidus himself to act in concert with you for the defence of the common cause. I entreat you, my dear Plancus, to employ your utmost endeavours for this important purpose; that every spark of this horrid war may be utterly and for ever extinguished. If you should be able to effect this, you will render a most godlike service to your country, and at the same time procure immortal honour to yourself.---Farewell.

May the 5th.

LETTER V.

[A. U. 710.]

TO THE SAME.

I SEIZED the very first opportunity of contributing to the augmentation of your dignities; and I omitted no distinction that could be considered either as the applause or reward of merit. This you will perceive by the decree which has been voted to your honour, with the utmost zeal and unanimity, in a very full house; and it is expressed in the very words I dictated from a paper which I had drawn up for that purpose. I was sensible, at the same time, from your letter, that it was more your

ambition to approve your actions to every honest mind, than to be distinguished with these ensigns of glory; but I thought it incumbent upon the republic to consider, not what you desire, but what you deserve. Let me only entreat you to finish the work which others have so happily begun; remembering, that whoever shall destroy Antony, will have the whole honour of concluding this war. It is thus that Homer gives the glory, not to Ajax nor Achilles, but to Ulysses alone, of having exterminated Troy.* Farewell.

LETTER VI.

[A. U. 710.]

DECIMUS BRUTUS TO CICERO.

I LOOK upon the obligations I have received from you as nothing inferior even to those which I have conferred upon the republic; but I am not capable, you are well assured, of making you so ill a return

* In the original it is, *Homerus non Ajacem, nec Achillem, sed Ulyssem appellavit πολυποροθιον*; which is not strictly true; for Homer frequently gives that epithet to Achilles. Plancus, however, could not mistake the hint, that any stratagem would be fair and honourable which should for ever remove Antony out of their way.

as I have experienced from some of my ungrateful countrymen. It might, perhaps, in the present conjuncture, be thought to have somewhat the air of flattery, were I to say, that your single applause outweighs, in my esteem, their whole united approbation. It is certain, however, that you view my actions by the faithful light of dispassionate truth and reason; whereas they, on the contrary, look upon them through the clouds of envy and malevolence. But I am little concerned how much soever they may oppose my honours, provided they do not obstruct me in my services to the republic; the very dangerous situation of which, let me now point out to you in as few words as possible. ,

In the first place, then, you are sensible what great disturbances the death of the consuls * may create in Rome; as it may give occasion to all the dangerous practices that ambition will suggest to those who are desirous of succeeding to their office.† This is all that prudence will allow me to say in a letter; and all, indeed, that is necessary to be said to a man of your penetration. As to

* Hirtius and Pansa.

† This seems plainly to point at Octavius; who, in fact, soon after procured himself to be elected consul, in conjunction with Quintus Pedius.

Antony, notwithstanding he made his escape from the field of battle with but a very few troops, and those too entirely disarmed; yet, by setting open the prisons, and by pressing all sorts of men that fell in his way, he has collected no contemptible number of forces. These have likewise been considerably augmented by the accession of the veteran and other troops of Ventidius; who, after a very difficult march over the Apennine mountains, has found means to join Antony in the fens of Sabata.* The only possible scheme which the latter can pursue, is, either to have recourse to Lepidus, if that general should be disposed to receive him; or to post himself on the Alps and Apennines, in order to make depredations with his cavalry (in which he is exceedingly strong) on the neighbouring country; or to march into Etruria,† where we have no army to oppose him. Had Cæsar, however, passed the Apennine mountains, agreeably to my advice,‡ I should have driven Antony into

* Between the Alps and the Apennines, on the coast of Genoa.

† Tuscany.

‡ “ Octavius, from the beginning, had no thoughts of pursuing Antony. He had already gained what he aimed at; had reduced Antony’s power so low, and raised his own so high, as to be in a condition of making his own

such difficulties, that perhaps, without striking a single blow, I should have been able to have wasted his whole army by famine. But the misfortune is, that Cæsar will neither be governed by me, nor will his army be governed by him; both which are very unhappy circumstances for our cause. This, then, being the sad state of public affairs, can I be solicitous, as I said above, what opposition I may meet with in respect to my own personal honours? The particulars I have here mentioned are of so very delicate a nature, that I know not how you will be able to touch upon them in the senate; or if you should, I fear it will be to no purpose. In the mean time, I am in no condition to subsist my troops any longer. When I first took up arms for the deliverance of the commonwealth, I had above four hundred thousand sester-tia * in ready money; but at present I have not only mortgaged every part of my estate, but have

terms with him in the partition of the empire; whereas, if Antony had been wholly destroyed, the republican party would have probably been too strong for him and Lepidus. When Octavius was pressed, therefore, to pursue Antony, he contrived still to delay it until it was too late; taking himself to be more usefully employed in securing to his interest the troops of the consuls."—*Life of Cic.* iii. 214.

* About 320,000l. sterling.

borrowed all I could possibly raise on the credit of my friends. I leave you to judge, therefore, with what difficulty I now maintain seven legions at my own expence. The truth is, I should not be equal to so great a charge, were I possessed of all Varro's * immense treasures.

As soon as I shall receive any certain information of Antony's motions, I will give you notice. In the mean time, I will only add, that I desire the continuance of your friendship upon no other terms than as you shall find an equal return of mine.---
Farewell.

From my camp at Tertona, †
May the 5th.

LETTER VII.

[A. U. 710.]

PLANCUS TO CICERO.

I GIVE you a thousand and a thousand thanks for your late favours, which, as long as I live, I shall

* Who this man of immense wealth was, is not known. There is no reason to believe that he was the celebrated Terentius Varro, to whom several letters in the preceding part of this collection are addressed.

† *Tortona*, about thirty miles north from Genoa.

always most gratefully acknowledge. More than this I dare not venture to promise; for I fear it will never be in my power to acquit such uncommon obligations, unless you should think, (what your letter endeavours, indeed, with much serious eloquence to persuade me,) that to remember them is to return them. You could not have acted with a more affectionate zeal, if the dignities of your own son had been in question; and I am perfectly sensible of the high honours that were decreed to me in consequence of your first motion for that purpose. I am sensible, too, that all your subsequent votes in my behalf were entirely conformable to the circumstances of the times, and the opinion of my friends; as I am informed, likewise, of the advantageous colours in which you are perpetually representing me, as well as of the frequent contests you sustain with my injurious detractors. It is incumbent upon me, therefore, in the first place, to endeavour to convince the republic, that I am worthy of the praises you bestow upon me; and, in the next place, to render you sensible, that I gratefully bear your friendship in remembrance. I will only add, under this article, that I desire you to protect me in the honours I have thus procured by your influence; but I desire it no otherwise than as my actions shall prove, that I am the man you wish to find me.

As soon as I had passed the Rhone, I detached a body of three thousand * horse under the command of my brother, with orders to advance towards Mutina, to which place I intended to follow them with the rest of my army. But, on my march thither, I received advice, that an action had happened, and that the siege was raised. Antony, I find, has no other resource left, but to retire into these parts with the remains of his broken forces. His only hopes, indeed, are, that he may be able to gain either Lepidus or his army, in which there are some troops no less disaffected to the republic than those which served under Antony himself. I thought proper, therefore, to recal my cavalry, and to halt in the country of the Allobroges, † that I may be ready to act as circumstances shall require. If Antony should retire into this country, destitute of men, I make no doubt, notwithstanding that he should be received by the army of Lepidus, to be able to give a good account of him with my present

* In the second letter of this Book, Plancus says this detachment consisted only of a thousand horse ; in one or other, therefore, of these passages, the transcribers must have committed some mistake.

† It comprehended the territories of Geneva, with part of Savoy and Dauphiné ; and formed a district of the province under the command of Lepidus.

forces. Should he even appear at the head of some troops, and should the tenth veteran legion revolt, which, together with the rest of those regiments, was, by my means, prevailed upon to engage in the service of the republic ; yet I shall endeavour, by acting on the defensive, to prevent him from gaining any advantage over us ; which I hope to effect, till a reinforcement from Italy shall enable me to exterminate this desperate crew. I will venture, at least, to assure you, my dear Cicero, that neither zeal nor vigilance shall be wanting on my part for that purpose. It is my sincere wish, indeed, that the senate may have no farther fears ; but if any should still remain, no man will enter into their cause with greater warmth and spirit, nor be willing to suffer more in the support of it than myself.

I am endeavouring to engage Lepidus to join with me in the same views ; and I have promised him, if he will act with a regard to the interest of the republic, that I shall, upon all occasions, yield him an entire deference. I have employed my brother, together with Furnius and Laterensis,* to ne-

* Furnius, it has already been observed, was lieutenant to Plancus, as Laterensis acted in the same capacity under Lepidus.

gociate this association between us ; and no private injury done to myself shall ever prevent me from concurring with my greatest enemy, whenever it may be necessary for the defence of the commonwealth. But should these overtures prove unsuccessful, I shall still persevere with the same zeal (and perhaps with more glory) in my endeavours to give satisfaction to the senate. Take care of your health, and allow me an equal return of your friendship. Farewell.

LETTER VIII.

[A. U. 710.]

DECIMUS BRUTUS, CONSUL-ELECT, TO CICERO.

I HAVE received a duplicate of the letter you sent me by my couriers ; to which I can only say ; in return, that my obligations to you rise much higher than I can easily discharge.

I gave you an account, in my last, of the posture of our affairs ; since which I have received intelligence, that Antony is on his march towards Lepidus. Among some papers of Antony, which are fallen into my hands, I found a list of the several persons whom he intended to employ as mediators in his behalf with Pollio, Lepidus, and Plancus ; so that he has not yet, it seems, given up all hopes of

gaining the latter. Nevertheless, I did not hesitate to send an immediate express to Plancus with advice of Antony's march. I expect, within a few days, to receive ambassadors from the Allobroges, and all the other districts of this province; and I doubt not of dismissing them strongly confirmed in their allegiance to the republic. You will be attentive on your part, I dare say, to promote all such necessary measures at Rome as shall be agreeable to your sentiments, and to the interest of the commonwealth. I am equally persuaded, that you will prevent, if it be possible to prevent, the malevolent schemes of my enemies. But if you should not succeed in these generous endeavours, you will, at least, have the satisfaction to find, that no indignities they can throw upon me are capable of deterring me from my purposes. Farewell.

From my camp on the frontiers of the Statiellenses,*
May the 5th.

* A territory in Liguria, the principal town of which was *Aquæ Statiellorum*, now called *Aqui*, in the district of Montserat.

LETTER IX.

[A. U. 710.]

PLANCUS TO CICERO.

SOME occurrences have arisen since I closed my former letter, of which I think it may import the republic that you should be apprised ; as both the commonwealth and myself, I hope, have reaped advantage from my assiduity in the affair I am going to mention. I solicited Lepidus, by repeated expresses, to lay aside all animosities between us, and amicably unite with me in concerting measures for the succour of the republic ; conjuring him to prefer the interest of his family and his country to that of a contemptible and desperate rebel ; and assuring him, if he did so, that he might entirely command me upon all occasions. Accordingly, by the intervention of Laterensis, I have succeeded in my negociation ; and Lepidus has given me his honour, that if he cannot prevent Antony from entering his province, * he will most certainly lead his army against him. He requests, likewise, that

* Narbonensian Gaul ; which, together with part of Spain, composed the province of Lepidus.

I would join him with my forces; and the rather, as Antony is extremely strong in cavalry, whereas that of Lepidus is very inconsiderable; and out of these few, ten of his best men have lately deserted to my camp. As soon as I received this express, I lost no time to forward and assist the good intentions of Lepidus. I clearly saw, indeed, the advantage that would arise from my joining him; as my horse would be of service in pursuing and destroying Antony's cavalry, and as the presence of my troops in general would be a restraint upon the disaffected part of those under his command. To this end, having spent a day in throwing a bridge across the Isara,* a very considerable river, that bounds the territories of the Allobroges, I passed it with my whole army on the 12th of May. But having received advice that Lucius Antonius† was advancing towards us with some regiments of horse and foot, and that he was actually arrived at Forum Julii;‡ I ordered, on the 14th, a detachment of four thousand horse to meet him, under the command of my brother; whom I purpose to follow by long marches, with four light-

* It is now called the *Isere*, a river in Dauphiné, which falls into the Rhone.

† A brother of Mark Antony.

‡ Now called Frejus, a city in Provence.

armed legions, and the remainder of my cavalry. And should that fortune which presides over the republic, prove in any degree favourable to my arms, I shall soon put an end, at once, both to our own fears, and to the hopes of these insolent rebels. But if the infamous Antony, apprised of our approach, should retire towards Italy, it will be the business of Brutus to intercept his march; and Brutus, I am persuaded, will not be wanting either in courage or conduct for that purpose. Nevertheless, I shall, in that case, send my brother with a detachment of horse to harass Antony in his retreat, and to protect Italy from his depredations.---Farewell.

LETTER X.

[A. U. 710.]

CASSIUS, PROCONSUL, TO CICERO.

YOUR letter* affords me a new proof of your extraordinary friendship. I find by it, that you are not only a well-wisher to my interest, (as you have at all times been indeed for the sake of the republic, as well as for my own,) but enter into it with

* This seems to be an answer to the 15th letter of the preceding Book, p. 14.

the warmest and most anxious solicitude. I was persuaded, therefore, that as you could not suppose me capable of being inactive at a season when my country laboured under a general oppression, you would be impatient to hear both of my personal welfare, and of the success of my military preparations. For this reason, as soon as Aulus Allienus had resigned those legions into my hands which he brought from Egypt,* I wrote to you by different couriers, whom I dispatched to Rome. I sent a letter, at the same time, to the senate; and, if my people obeyed their instructions, it was not delivered till it was first read to you. But, if these expresses should not be arrived, I am persuaded they have been intercepted by Dolabella; who, after having most villainously murdered Trebonius,† has made himself master of his province.

* See Vol. IV. p. 286, note.

† It has already been observed, (Vol. IV. p. 274, note,) that Dolabella left Rome before the expiration of his consulship, in order to possess himself of the government of Syria. In his way thither he arrived at Smyrna; where Trebonius, proconsul of Asia Minor, resided. Trebonius refused him admittance into the city, but treated him, however, with great civility, and many compliments mutually passed between them. With these, Dolabella appeared satisfied, and, pretending to pursue his march, proceeded towards Ephesus; but he returned in the night, and making himself

All the troops which I found in Syria, have submitted to my authority. However, I have been a little retarded in my preparations, in order to distribute some donatives which I had promised to the soldiers, but I have now discharged my engagements.

If you are sensible that I have refused no labours nor dangers for the service of my country; if it was by your advice and persuasion, that I took up arms against those infamous invaders of our liberties; if I have not only raised an army for the defence of the commonwealth, but have even snatched it from most cruel and oppressive hands; let these considerations recommend my interests to your care and protection. Had Dolabella, indeed, possessed himself of these forces, the expectation of such an additional body of troops, even before they had actually joined Antony, would greatly have con-

master of the city by surprise, seized Trebonius in his bed. Cicero, in one of his Philippics, expatiates upon the cruelties which Dolabella exercised on this his unfortunate, but illustrious prisoner. He kept him two days under torture, to extort a discovery of the public money in his custody, insulting him, at the same time, with the most opprobrious language; he then ordered his head to be cut off, and exhibited to the populace on the point of a spear, his body to be dragged through the principal streets of Smyrna, and afterwards to be thrown into the sea. See Vol. IV. p. 177, note.—*Appian. B. C. iii. p. 542. Phil. xi. 2, 3.*

firmed and strengthened his party. If, upon this account, therefore, you think these soldiers deserve highly of the republic, let them experience the benefit of your patronage, nor suffer them to have reason to regret, that they preferred their duty to the commonwealth, to all the powerful temptations of plunder and rapine. I must also recommend it to your care, that due honours be paid to the generals, Marcus and Crispus. * As to Bassus, he obstinately refused to deliver up the legion under his command; and had they not, without his consent, deputed some of their officers to treat with me, he would have shut the gates of Apamea, and forced me to have entered the town by assault. I make these requests, then, as well in the name of our friendship, which, I trust, will have much weight with you; as in that of the republic, which has ever, I know, been the object of your warmest affection. Believe me, the army under my command is zealously attached not only to the senate, and to every friend of our country, but particularly to yourself. The frequent accounts, indeed, they hear of your patriot-disposition, have extremely endeared you to them, and should they find their

* Some account of these persons, as well as of Bassus, mentioned in the next sentence, has been given in the preceding notes.

interests to be a part of your concern, they will consider you, in all respects, as their first and greatest benefactor.

Since I wrote the above, I have received intelligence that Dolabella is marched into Cilicia, whither I purpose immediately to follow him. I will give you early notice of the event of this expedition, and may I so prove successful, as I shall endeavour to deserve well of the republic. Take care of your health, and continue your friendship to me. Farewell.

From my camp, May the 7th.

LETTER XI.

[A. U. 710.]

TO DECIMUS BRUTUS, CONSUL ELECT.

THE message you commissioned Galba and Volu-
lunius to deliver to the senate, sufficiently inti-
mates the nature of those fears and suspicions which
you imagine we have reason to entertain. But I
must confess, that the apprehensions you would thus
infuse into us, seem by no means worthy of that
glorious victory you have obtained over the ene-
mies of the commonwealth. Believe me, my dear
Brutus, both the senate, and the generals that sup-
port its cause, are animated with an undaunted re-

solution ; we were sorry, therefore, that you, whom we esteem the bravest captain that ever the republic employed, should think us capable of any timidity. Is it possible, indeed, after having confidently reposed our hopes on your courage and conduct, when you were invested by Antony in all the fullness of his strength and power, that any of us should harbour the least fear, now that the siege is raised, and the enemy's army entirely overthrown ? Nor have we any thing, surely, to apprehend from Lepidus. For who can imagine him so utterly void of all rational conduct, as to have professed himself an advocate for peace, when we were engaged in a most necessary and important war, and yet to take up arms against the republic the moment that most desirable peace is restored ? You are far too sagacious, I doubt not, to entertain such a thought. * Nevertheless, the fears you have renewed amongst us, at a time when every temple throughout Rome is resounding with our thanksgiving for your deliverance, have cast a very considerable damp upon our joy. May the fact prove, then, (what, indeed, I am inclined to believe, as well

* It will appear, in the progress of these letters, that if Cicero was really in earnest in what he here says concerning Lepidus, it was he himself, and not Brutus, who wanted sagacity.

as hope,) that Antony is completely vanquished. But should he happen to recover some degree of strength, he will most assuredly find, that neither the senate is destitute of wisdom, nor the people of courage; I will add, too, nor the republic of a general, so long as you shall be alive to lead forth her armies. Farewell.

May the 19th.

LETTER XII.

[A. U. 710.]

PLANCUS TO CICERO.

ANTONY arrived at Forum-Julii, with the van of his army, on the 15th of May, and Ventidius is only two days march behind him. Lepidus writes me word, that he proposes to wait for me at Forum-Voconii, * where he is at present encamped, a place about four-and-twenty miles distant from Forum-Julii. If he and fortune do not deceive my expectations, the senate may depend upon my speedily terminating this business to their full satisfaction.

I mentioned to you, in a former letter, that the great fatigues which my brother had undergone, by his continual marches, had extremely impaired

* Now called *Le Luc*, in Provence.

his constitution. However, as soon as he was sufficiently recovered to get abroad, he considered his health as an acquisition which he had gained as much for the service of the republic, as for himself; and was the first, therefore, to engage in every hazardous expedition. But I have recommended it to him, and, indeed, insisted, that he should return to Rome, as he would be much more likely to wear himself away by continuing in the camp, than be able to give me any assistance. Besides, I imagined, now that the republic was most unhappily deprived of both the consuls, that the presence of so worthy a magistrate would be absolutely necessary at Rome. But if any of you should think otherwise, let *me* be censured for my imprudent advice; but let not my brother be condemned as failing in his duty.

Lepidus, agreeably to my request, has delivered Apella into my hands, as an hostage for the faithful execution of his engagements to co-operate with me in the defence of the commonwealth. Lucius Gellius has given me proofs of his zeal, as he has acted also, in the affair of the three brothers, to the satisfaction of Sextus Gavianus. I have lately employed the latter in some negociations between Lepidus and myself, and I have found him firmly attached to the interest of the republic. It is with great pleasure I give this testimony in his favour,

a tribute which I shall always be ready to pay wherever it is deserved.

Take care of your health, and allow me the same share of your heart which you most assuredly possess of mine. I recommend my dignities, likewise, to your protection; and I hope, if I can plead any merit, you will continue your good offices to me with the same singular affection you have hitherto discovered. Farewell.

LETTER XIII.

[A. U. 710.]

TO CORNICIUS.

You recommend a friend of my own, when you desire my good offices to Lucceius: be assured I shall faithfully support his interest by every mean in my power.

We have lost our colleagues, * Hirtius and Pansa: and the death of these excellent consuls, who discharged their office with great advantage to the republic, has happened at a very unseasonable conjuncture. For though we are at present delivered from the oppressions of Antony, we are not wholly free from all apprehensions of danger. But, if I

* In the college of augurs.

may be permitted, I shall continue my usual endeavours to preserve the commonwealth from ruin; though, I must confess, I am full weary of the work. No lassitude, however, ought to obstruct the duties we owe to our country.— But I forbear to enter farther into this subject, as I had rather you should hear of my actions from others, than from myself. The account I receive of yours is entirely agreeable to my wishes; but it is far otherwise with respect to the reports concerning Minucius. They are, indeed, very unfavourable to his character, notwithstanding all the fine things you said of him in one of your letters. I should be glad to know the truth of the case, and to be informed of every thing else which is transacting in your province. Farewell.

LETTER XIV.

[A. U. 710.]

TO DECIMUS BRUTUS, CONSUL-ELECT.

It is with infinite satisfaction, my dear Brutus, that I find you approve of my conduct in the senate, with respect both to the decemvirs,* and to

* These decemvirs were probably the ten persons whom the senate, in the first transports of their supposed complete

the honours decreed to our young† man. Yet, after all, what have my labours availed? Believe me, my friend, (and you know I am not apt to boast,) the senate was the grand engine of my power: but all those springs which I used so successfully to manage, have utterly lost their force, and I can no longer direct its motions. The truth of it is, the news of your glorious sally from the garrison of Mutina, of Antony's flight, and of his army being entirely cut to pieces, had inspired such confident hopes of a complete victory, that the disappointment has cast a general damp upon the spirit I had raised against our enemies; and all my ardent invectives seem at last to have proved just as insignificant as if I had been combating with my own shadow. But to the purpose of your letter.—Those who are acquainted with the dispositions of the fourth and the *martial* legions, assure me, they will never be prevailed on to serve under you. As to the supply of money which you desire, some

victory before the walls of Modena, had appointed to enquire into the conduct of Antony, during his administration of the consular office. *Vid. Appian. B. C. iii. 578.*

† Octavius. The honours here mentioned were, perhaps, the ovation, (a kind of inferior and less splendid triumph,) which, by the influence of Cicero, was decreed to young Caesar, for his services at the siege of Modena. See *Life of Cic. iii. p. 211.*

measures may, and most assuredly shall, be taken in order to raise it. I am wholly in your sentiments with regard to the calling Brutus* out of Greece, and retaining Cæsar here for the protection of Italy. I agree with you, likewise, my dear Brutus, that you have enemies; and though I find it no very difficult matter to sustain their attacks, yet still, however, they somewhat embarrass my schemes in your favour.

The legions from Africa† are daily expected. In the mean time, the world is greatly astonished to find, that the war is broke out again in your province. Nothing, in truth, ever happened so unexpectedly; as we had promised ourselves, from the account of the victory which was brought to us on your birth-day, that the peace of the republic was established for many generations. But now all our fears are revived with as much strength as ever.

You mentioned in your letter, dated the 15th of May, that you were just informed, by an express from Plancus, that Lepidus had refused to receive Antony. Should this prove to be fact, our business will be so much the easier; if not, we shall have a very difficult struggle to maintain; and it depends

* Marcus Brutus.

† These were some of the veteran legions that had served under Julius Cæsar. See p. 88, note.

upon you to ease me of my great apprehensions for the event. As for my own part, I have exhausted all my powers, and I am utterly incapable of doing more than I have already performed. It is far otherwise, however, with my friend; and I not only wish, but expect, to see you the greatest and most distinguished of Romans. Farewell.

LETTER XV.

[A. U. 710.]

TO PLANCUS.

NOTHING, my dear Plancus, could be more glorious to yourself, nor more acceptable to the senate, than the letter you lately addressed to that assembly: I will add too, nothing could be more opportune than the particular juncture in which it was delivered. Cornutus received it in the presence of a very full house, just as he had communicated to us a cold and irresolute letter from Lepidus. Yours was read immediately afterwards, and it was heard with the loudest acclamations of applause. It was highly pleasing, indeed, to the senate, not only from the importance of its contents, and those zealous services to the republic, of which it gave us an account, but from that strength and elegance of expression with which it was animated. The senate

was extremely urgent that it might immediately be taken into consideration; but Cornutus thought proper to decline their request. However, the whole assembly expressing great indignation at his refusal, the question was put by five of the tribunes of the people. When Servilius was called upon for his opinion, he moved, that the debate might be adjourned. What my sentiments were, (and I was supported in them by the unanimous concurrence of the whole house,) you will see by the decree that passed upon this occasion.

I am sensible, that your own superior judgment is abundantly sufficient to direct you in all emergencies, yet I cannot forbear advising you not to wait for the sanction of the senate, in so critical a conjuncture as the present, and which undoubtedly must often demand immediate action. Be a senate, my friend, to yourself; and without any other authority, scruple not to pursue such measures as the interest of the republic shall require. In one word, let your actions anticipate our expectations, and give us the pleasure of hearing that you have executed some glorious exploit, ere we are so much as apprised that you even had it in your intention. I will venture to assure you, that the senate will most certainly approve both your zeal and your judgment, in whatever you shall thus undertake. Farewell.

LETTER XVI.

[A. U. 710.]

TO DECIMUS BRUTUS, CONSUL ELECT.

I AM indebted to you for your short letter by Flaccus Volumnius, as well as for two others more full, one of which was brought by the courier of Titus Vibius, the other was forwarded to me by Lupus ; and all of them came to my hands on the same day. I find, by your own account, as well as by that which Græceius has given me, that the war, far from being extinguished, seems to be breaking out again with greater violence. You are sensible, if Antony should gain any strength, that all your illustrious services to the republic will be utterly frustrated. The first accounts we received here, and which, indeed, were universally credited, represented him as having run away in great consternation, attended only with a few frightened and disarmed soldiers. But if the truth, after all, should be what Græceius assures me, that Antony is in fact so strong as to render it unsafe to give him battle, he does not seem so much to have fled from Mutina, as to have changed the seat of war. This unexpected news has given all Rome another countenance, and a general air of disappointment ap-

pears in every face. There are even some amongst us who complain of your not having immediately pursued Antony; for they imagine, if no time had been lost, that he must inevitably have been destroyed. But it is usual with the people in all governments, and especially in ours, to be particularly disposed to abuse their liberty, by licentious reflections on those to whom they are indebted for the enjoyment of it. However, one should be careful not to give them any just cause for their censures.

To say all in one word, whoever destroys Antony will have the glory of terminating the war: a hint which I had rather leave to your own reflections, than enter myself into a more open explanation.* Farewell.

LETTER XVII.

[A. U. 710.]

DECIMUS BRUTUS TO CICERO.

I WILL no longer attempt to make any formal acknowledgments of the repeated instances I receive of your friendship; mere words are a very inadequate return to those obligations which my best services can but ill repay. If you will look back

* See p. 57, note.

upon my former letters, you cannot be at a loss to discover the reasons that prevented me from pursuing Antony immediately after the battle of Mutina. The truth, my dear Cicero, is, that I was not only unprovided both with cavalry and baggage-horses; but not having, at that time, had an interview with Cæsar, I could not depend on his assistance; and I was wholly ignorant likewise that Hirtius was killed. This will account for my not having pursued Antony on the day of the engagement. The day following, I received an express from Pansa to attend him at Bononia; but in my way thither, being informed of his death, I immediately returned back to join my little corps. I may justly call them so, indeed, as my forces are extremely diminished, and in a very bad condition from the great hardships they suffered during the siege. It was by these means, that Antony got two days advance of me; and as he marched in disorder, he could retire much faster than it was in my power to pursue. He increased his forces, likewise, by pressing the inhabitants, and throwing open the prisons in every town through which he passed; and in this manner he continued his march, till he arrived in the fens of Sabata. This is a place with which I must bring you acquainted: it is situated between the Alps and the Apennines, and the roads that lie about it are scarce practicable. When I

had reached within thirty miles of Antony, I was informed, that he had been joined by Ventidius, and had made a speech, at the head of their combined troops, to persuade them to follow him over the Alps; assuring them, that Lepidus had agreed to support him. Nevertheless, not only his own soldiers, (which, indeed, are a very inconsiderable number,) but those likewise of Ventidius, repeatedly and unanimously declared, that they were determined either to conquer, or perish in Italy; and at the same time desired, that they might be conducted to Pollentia.* Antony found it in vain to oppose them; however, he deferred his march till the ensuing day. As soon as I received this intelligence, I detached five cohorts to Pollentia; and am now following them with the remainder of my troops. This detachment threw themselves into that city, an hour before Trebellius arrived with his cavalry; a circumstance which gives me great satisfaction, as it is a point, I think, upon which our whole success depends. When the enemy found that their designs were thus frustrated, they conceived hopes of crossing the Alps into Gaul; as they supposed the four legions commanded by Plancus

* Some remains of this city still subsist, under the name of Polenza. It is situated at the confluence of the Stura and the Tanaro, in Piedmont.

would not be able to withstand their united forces, and that an army from Italy could not overtake them soon enough to prevent their passage. However, the Allobroges, together with my detachment, have hitherto been sufficient to prevent their design; which, I trust, they will find still more difficult to effect, when I shall come up with the rest of my forces. But should they happen, in the mean time, to pass the Isara, I shall exert my utmost endeavours, that this circumstance may not be attended with any ill consequences to the commonwealth.

Let it raise the spirits and the hopes of the senate to observe, that Plancus and myself, together with our respective armies, act in perfect concert with each other, and are ready to hazard every danger in support of the common cause. However, whilst you thus confidently rely on our zeal and diligence, you will remit nothing, I hope, of your own, but employ your utmost care to send us a reinforcement, as well as every other necessary supply, that may render us in a condition to defend your liberties against those who have infamously conspired their ruin. One cannot, indeed, but look upon these our enemies with so much the greater indignation, as they have acted with the vilest hypocrisy, and suddenly turned those troops against

their country, which they long pretended to have raised for its defence. Farewell.

LETTER XVIII.

[A. U. 710.]

DECIMUS BRUTUS TO CICERO.

I WISH you would peruse the letter I have addressed to the senate, and make what alterations you shall judge proper. You will find by it, that I am under an absolute necessity of thus applying to them. Whilst I imagined, that I should be joined by the fourth and martial legions,* agreeably to the decree of the senate, which passed for that purpose, on the motion of Paulus and Drusus, I was less solicitous about the rest; but now that I have only some new raised regiments, and those too extremely ill accoutred, I cannot but be apprehensive upon your accounts, as well as upon my own.

* These were veteran legions which had served under Cæsar. But notwithstanding that they entered into the army of the late consuls, Hirtius and Pansa, they could by no means be prevailed with to join Decimus Brutus; in resentment, it is probable, of the part he bore in the conspiracy against their favourite general. *Vid. Ep. Famil. xi. 14.*

The citizens of Vicentia * have always distinguished Marcus Brutus and myself by their particular regard. I entreat you, therefore, to endeavour, that justice be done them by the senate in the affair concerning the slaves. They are, indeed, entitled to your favour, both by the equity of their cause, and the fidelity with which they have, upon all occasions, persevered in their allegiance to the republic; whereas their adversaries, on the contrary, are a most seditious and faithless people. Farewell.

Vercellæ, † May the 21st.

LETTER XIX.

[A. U. 710.]

MARCUS LEPIDUS ‡ TO CICERO.

HAVING received advice, that Antony was advancing with his troops towards my province, and had sent before him a detachment of his cavalry, under the command of his brother Lucius, I moved with my army from the confluence of the Rhone

* Vicenza, a maritime city in the territories of the Venetians.

† Vercelli, in the duchy of Milan.

‡ See p. 13, note.

and the Arar,* in order to oppose their passage. I continued my march without halting, till I arrived at Forum Voconii, and am now encamped somewhat beyond that town, on the river Argenteus,† opposite to Antony. Ventidius has joined him with his three legions, and has formed his camp a little above mine. Antony, before this conjunction, had the second legion entire, together with a considerable number of men, though indeed wholly unarmed, who escaped from the general slaughter of his other legions. He is extremely strong in cavalry; for as none of those troops suffered in the late action, he has no less than * * * ‡ horse. Great numbers of his soldiers, both horse and foot, are continually deserting to my camp, so that his troops diminish every day. Both Silanus § and Culeo || have left his army, and are returned to mine. But,

* The Saone, which falls into the Rhone at Lyons.

† The Argens, in Provence: it empties itself into the Mediterranean, a few miles below Frejus.

‡ The number is omitted in all the ancient MSS.

§ See p. 46, note.

|| He had been sent by Lepidus with a body of men, under the pretence of guarding the passes of the Alps, but most probably with secret instructions to favour the march of Antony over those mountains, in his way to the camp of Lepidus; for he suffered Antony to pass them without the least obstruction. *Appian. B. C. iii. p. 579.*

notwithstanding, I was greatly offended by their going to Antony, contrary to my inclination, yet, in regard to the connections that subsist between us, and in compliance with my usual clemency, I have thought proper to pardon them. However, I do not, upon any occasion, employ their services, nor indeed suffer them to remain in my camp.

As to what concerns my conduct in this war, you may depend upon it, I shall not be wanting in my duty either to the senate or the republic; and whatever farther measures I shall take to this end, I shall not fail to communicate them to you.

The friendship between us has, upon all occasions, been inviolably preserved on both sides, and we have mutually yied in our best good offices to each other. But I doubt not, that since this great and sudden commotion has been raised in the commonwealth, some false and injurious reports have been spread of me by my enemies, which, in the zeal of your heart for the interest of the republic, have given you much uneasiness. I have the satisfaction, however, to be informed by my agents at Rome, that you are by no means disposed easily to credit these idle rumours; for which I think myself, as I justly ought, extremely obliged to you. I am so likewise for the former instances of your friendship, in promoting my public honours, the

grateful remembrance of which, be assured, is indelibly impressed upon my heart.

Let me conjure you, my dear Cicero, if you are sensible that my public conduct has, upon all occasions, been worthy of the name I bear, to be persuaded, that I shall continue to act with equal, or, if possible, even with superior zeal.* Let me hope, too, that the greater the favours are which you have conferred upon me, the more you will think yourself engaged to support my credit and character. Farewell.

From my camp, at Pons Argenteus,
May the 22d.

LETTER XX.

[A. U. 710.]

PLANCUS TO CICERO.

You have been apprised, no doubt, by Lævus and Nerva, as well as by the letter they delivered to you on my part, of the design I was meditating when they left me; as, indeed, they have constant-

* There was so little of truth in these professions, that Lepidus, within a very few days from the date of this letter, openly joined with Antony against the senate. See Let. 28. of this Book.

ly borne a share in all my councils and measures of every kind. It has happened, however, to me, what happens not unfrequently, I suppose, to every man who is tender of his reputation, and desirous of approving his conduct to the friends of his country; I have given up a safer scheme, as being liable, perhaps, to some ill natured exceptions, in exchange for a more dangerous one that may better evince my zeal. I am to inform you, then, that after the departure of my lieutenants,* I received two letters from Lepidus, entreating me to join him. These were seconded by the much stronger solicitations of Laterensis, who earnestly represented to me, (what, indeed, I am also apprehensive of myself,) that there is great reason to fear a mutiny among the disaffected troops under the conduct of Lepidus. I determined immediately, therefore, to march to his assistance, and take an equal share in the dangers with which he was threatened. I was sensible, at the same time, that to wait on the banks of the Isara, till Brutus should pass that river with his army, and to meet the enemy in conjunction with my colleague, whose forces, as well as their general, would act in perfect harmony with me and my troops, would be much the most cautious mea-

* Lævus and Nerva, the persons mentioned above.

sure with respect to my own personal security. But I reflected, that if any misfortune should attend Lepidus, it would be wholly imputed to me, and I should be condemned either as obstinately suffering my resentment to prevent me from giving succour to my enemy in the cause of the republic, or of timidly avoiding to take part in the danger of a most just and necessary war. As my presence, therefore, might be a mean of protecting Lepidus, and of bringing his army into a better disposition, I resolved to expose myself to all hazards, rather than appear to act with too much circumspection. But never was any man more anxious in an affair, for which he was in no sort answerable, than I am in the present; for though I should have no manner of doubt, if the army of Lepidus were not concerned, yet, under that circumstance, I am full of apprehensions for the event. Had it been my fortune to have met Antony before my junction with Lepidus, I am sure he would not have been able to have kept the field against me even a single hour; such is the confidence I have in my own troops, and so heartily do I despise his broken forces, as well as those of that paltry muleteer, the contemptible Ventidius.* But as the case is now circumstanced,

* See p. 53, note.

I dread to think what may be the consequence, should any ill humours lie concealed in the army of Lepidus; as they may possibly break out in all their malignity, before they can be remedied, or even discovered. It is certain, however, that Lepidus, together with the well affected part of his army, would be exposed to great danger, if we should not act in conjunction: besides, that our infamous enemies would gain a very considerable advantage, should they draw off any of his forces. If my presence, therefore, should prove a mean of preventing these evils, I shall think myself much indebted to my courage and good fortune for engaging me to make the experiment. With this design, I moved with my army from the banks of the Isara on the 21st of May, having first erected a fort at each end of the bridge, which I had thrown over that river, and placed a strong party to defend it, that when Brutus shall arrive, he may have nothing to retard his passage. I have only to add, that I hope to join Lepidus within eight days from the date of this letter. Farewell.

LETTER XXI.

[A. U. 710.]

FROM THE SAME TO CICERO.

I SHOULD be ashamed, that this letter is so little consistent with my former, if it arose from any instability of my own. But it is much otherwise, and I have steadily pursued every measure in my power to engage Lepidus to act in concert with me for the defence of the republic, imagining, it would render you less apprehensive of my success against our wretched enemies. To this end, I not only complied with all the conditions he proposed, but even engaged for more than he demanded; and I had so much confidence in the sincerity of his intentions, that I ventured to assure you, no longer than two days ago, that he would zealously co-operate with me in carrying on the war upon one common plan. I depended, indeed, upon the promises he had given me under his own hand, together with the assurances I had likewise received from Laterensis, who was at that time in my camp, and who earnestly conjured me to forget all resentments against Lepidus, and to rely upon his good faith. But Lepidus has now put it out of my power to entertain these favourable hopes of him any

longer. However, I have taken, and shall continue to take, all necessary precautions, that the republic may not be prejudiced by my too easy credulity. I am to inform you, then, that after I had used the utmost expedition (agreeably to his own earnest request,) to transport my army over the Isara, and for that purpose had, in the space of a single day, thrown a bridge across that river, I received a counter express from him, requiring me to advance no farther, as he should not have occasion, he said, for my assistance. Nevertheless, I will own to you, I was so imprudent as to proceed in my march, believing, that the true reason of his thus changing his mind arose from an unwillingness to have a partner with him in his glory. I imagined, that without depriving him of any share of that honour which he seemed so desirous to monopolize, I might post myself at some convenient distance, in order to be ready to support him with my troops, in case he should be pressed by the enemy; an event which, in the simplicity of my heart, I thought not improbable. In the mean time, I received a letter from the excellent Laterensis, which was conceived in terms full of despair. He complained, that he had been greatly deceived; and assured me, that neither Lepidus nor his army were to be trusted. He expressly cautioned me, at the same time, to be upon my guard against their artifices; adding, that

he had faithfully discharged the engagements he had entered into on his part; and hoped I would act with the same fidelity to the republic on mine. I have sent a copy of this letter to Titius, and purpose to transmit the originals of all the rest relating to this affair, by the hands of Lævus Cispus, who was privy to the whole transaction. I shall insert in this packet the letters of Lepidus, to which I did not give any credit, as well as those to which I did.

I must not forget to add, that when Lepidus harangued his soldiers, these mighty honest fellows were exceedingly clamorous for peace. They protested, that after the loss of both the consuls; after the destruction of so many brave men, who had perished in defence of their country; and after Antony and his adherents had been declared enemies of the commonwealth, and their estates confiscated,--- they were determined not to draw their swords any more, either on the one side or the other. They were prompted to behave thus mutinously, not only by the insolent suggestions of their own hearts, but by the encouragement also of their officers, particularly Canidius, Rufrenus, and others, whose names the senate shall be acquainted with at a proper season. Lepidus was so far from punishing this sedition, that he did not take even a single step to restrain it. I thought, therefore, that it would be

the highest temerity to expose my own faithful troops, together with my auxiliaries, which are commanded by some of the most considerable chiefs of Gaul, and in effect, too, my whole province, to their combined armies. I considered, if I should thus lose my life, and involve the republic in my own destruction, I should fall, not only without honour, but without pity. In consequence of these reflections, I have determined to march my forces back again, that our wretched enemies may not have so great an advantage as my advancing any farther might possibly give them. I shall endeavour to post my army so advantageously as to cover the province under my command from being insulted, even supposing the troops of Lepidus should actually revolt. In short, it shall be my care to preserve every thing in its present situation, till the senate shall send an army hither, and vindicate the liberties of the republic with the same success in this part of the world, as attended their arms before the walls of Mutina. In the mean time, be assured, that no man will act with more fervent zeal than myself in all the various occurrences of the war; and I shall most readily either encounter the enemy in the field, or sustain the hardships of a siege, or even lay down my life itself, as any of these circumstances shall prove necessary for the service of the senate. Let me exhort you then, my

dear Cicero, to exert your utmost efforts to send a speedy reinforcement to me, ere Antony shall have increased the number of his forces, or our own shall be entirely dispirited. For if dispatch be given to this affair, these infamous banditti will undoubtedly be extirpated, and the republic remain in full possession of her late victory. Take care of your health, and continue your friendship to me.

P. S. I know not whether it may be necessary to make any excuse for the absence of my brother, who was prevented from attending me in this expedition by a slow fever, occasioned by the great fatigues he has lately undergone. As no man has shewn more zeal or courage in the cause of the republic, he will undoubtedly return to the duties of his post, the very first moment his health shall permit.

I recommend my honours to your protection, though I must confess, at the same time, that all my desires ought to be satisfied, since I enjoy the privilege of your friendship, and the satisfaction of seeing you invested with the high credit and authority I have ever wished you. I will leave it, therefore, entirely to yourself, both when, and in what manner, I shall experience the effect of your good offices; and will only request you to suffer me to succeed Hirtius in your affection, as I cer-

tainly do in the respect and esteem he bore you.
Farewell.

LETTER XXII.

[A. U. 710.]

TO FURNIUS.*

IF the interest of the republic requires the continuance of your services, and it be necessary, (as all the world, indeed, is of opinion it is,) that you should bear a part in those important operations, which must extinguish the remaining flames of the war, you cannot surely be engaged in a more worthy, a more laudable, or a more illustrious, pursuit. I think, therefore, you should by no means interrupt your applauded efforts in the cause of liberty, for the sake of obtaining the prætorship somewhat earlier than you are regularly entitled to enjoy it. I say, your *applauded* efforts; for let not my friend be ignorant of the fame which his conduct has acquired. Believe me, it is inferior only to that of Plancus himself, both by his own confession, and in the judgment too of all the world. If there is any far-

* He had been tribune, in the year of Rome 703, and was at this time in the army of Plancus, as one of his lieutenants.

ther service, then, remaining for you to perform to your country, you ought to pursue it with an unbroken application, as an employment of all others the most truly honourable : and what, my friend, shall stand in competition with true honour ? But should you imagine, that you have amply satisfied the duties you owe to the commonwealth, I do not dissuade you from hastening hither, when the time of the elections shall approach, provided this ambitious impatience shall nothing diminish from the lustre of that reputation you have so justly obtained. I could name, however, many instances of persons of great distinction, who, during their engagements in the service of the republic abroad, have renounced their legal pretensions of soliciting employments at home ; a sacrifice which, in your own case, will be so much the less, as you are not at present strictly qualified to offer yourself as a candidate. Had you already, indeed, passed through the office of ædile, and two years * had intervened since your exercising that function, the self-denial would have been greater ; whereas now, you will forego nothing of the usual and stated time of pe-

* By the laws of Rome, a man could not be chosen prætor, till two years after he had served the office of ædile ; and the same distance of time was likewise required between the prætorship and the consulate.

titioning for the post in question. I am very sensible, that your interest is much too strong to require the assistance of Plancus; nevertheless, should his arms be attended with the success we wish, your applications would certainly appear with greater advantage were they deferred till the time of his consulate.

Thus much (as I was willing you should know my sentiments) I thought proper to say; but more, I am persuaded, your own good sense and judgment would render unnecessary. The sum of all, then, is shortly this; that I would have you regulate your conduct, upon all occurrences, not by the common standard of popular ambition, but by that of true and solid glory; and look upon a lasting reputation as of more value, than the transient honour of enjoying the prætorian office somewhat earlier than usual. I had a consultation the other day at my house upon this subject, with your very good friends, Cæcina, Calvisius, and my brother, at which your freedman Dardanus was likewise present; and they every one of them joined with me in the opinion I have here given you. But, after all, you yourself are the best and most competent judge.---Farewell.

LETTER XXIII.

[A. U. 710.]

DECIMUS BRUTUS TO CICERO.

FRIENDSHIP and gratitude make me feel, upon your account, what I never felt upon my own; and I will confess, that I am not without fear in regard to a story which has been propagated concerning you. I thought it by no means a matter to be despised when I had only heard of it, as I frequently did, from common report; but it has lately been mentioned to me, likewise, by Segulius. This man tells me, (though what he says, indeed, is generally of a piece with the rest of his character,) that paying a visit at Cæsar's, where you were much the subject of the conversation, Cæsar complained (and it was the only charge, it seems, which he brought against you) of an ambiguous expression *

* The expression itself is inserted in the original; but as it turns upon an ambiguity that will not hold in our language, it was impossible to preserve it in the translation. *Laudandum adolescentum*, Cicero is charged with having said, *ornandum, tollendum*; the last of which words is capable of a double meaning, and may imply either that Octavius should be advanced to the dignities of the state, or

which you had made use of concerning him. I suspect the whole to be a mere fiction of Segulius; or, at least, that it was he himself who reported these words to Cæsar. Segulius endeavoured, at the same time, to persuade me, that you are in great danger of falling a victim to the resentment of the veteran legions, who speak of you, he pretends, with much indignation. The principal cause, it seems, of their displeasure, is, that both Cæsar and myself are left out of the commission for dividing the lands* among the soldiers, and that

that his life should be taken away. The polite and learned panegyrist of Cicero's conduct, has endeavoured to vindicate his admired hero from a charge so little favourable both to his prudence and his honour; and it is to be wished that his arguments were as convincing as they are plausible. In a point, however, that does not admit of any positive proof, candour will incline on the favourable side; though I cannot but agree with an excellent author, that if the accusation was true, "it very much takes off from the ingratitude of Octavius in consenting to the death of his benefactor; since such double dealing could hardly deserve the name of an obligation, let the effects of it be ever so advantageous."—*Life of Cic.* iii. p. 240. *Observ. on the Life of Cic.* iii. p. 54.

* These were lands which the senate seem to have promised as an encouragement to their troops upon the breaking out of the war against Antony.—*Vid. Philip.* xiv. 13.

every thing is disposed of just as you and your friends at Rome think proper.

Notwithstanding that I was on my march * when I received this account, yet I thought it would not be advisable to pass the Alps till I had informed myself how affairs stand. I am well persuaded, nevertheless, that, with respect to yourself, these reports and menaces of the veterans aim at nothing farther than by alarming your fears, and incensing the young Cæsar against you, to obtain for themselves a more considerable proportion of the rewards decreed by the senate. But I do not intend, by saying this, to dissuade you from standing upon your guard; as nothing, be assured, is more valuable to me than your life. Let me only caution you not to suffer your fears to run you into greater dangers than those you would avoid. However, I would advise you to obviate the clamours of these veterans as far as you reasonably may; and to comply with their desires, both in regard to the decemvirs,† and to the distribution of their rewards. As to those forfeited estates which belonged to the veterans who served under Antony, I should be glad, if you think proper, that Cæsar and myself may be

* In order to join Plancus.

† The persons appointed to execute the commission for the distribution of the lands above mentioned.

nominated to assign them to the troops. But, in reference to the pecuniary donative which they have been also promised, it will be proper to act with more deliberation, and as the circumstances of the public finances shall require ; to which end, it may be signified to them, that the senate will take these their claims into consideration. As to those other four legions, to whom the senate has also decreed an allotment of lands, I imagine that the estates in Campania, together with those which were formerly seized by Sylla, will be sufficient for the purpose. I should think, too, that the best method of division would be, either to parcel out those lands, in equal shares, to the several legions, or to determine their respective proportions by lot. But when I thus give you my opinion, it is by no means as pretending to superior judgment, but merely from the affection of my heart towards you, and from my sincere desire that the public tranquillity may be preserved ; which I am very sensible, if any accident should happen to you, cannot possibly be maintained.

I do not purpose to march out of Italy, unless I should find it greatly expedient. Meanwhile, I am employed in disciplining my troops, and furnishing them with arms ; and I hope to appear with no contemptible body of forces, upon any emergency that shall again call me into the field. But Cæsar,

however, has not sent back the legion to me which served in Pansa's army.

I request your immediate answer to this letter; and if you should have any thing of importance to communicate to me, which requires particular secrecy, I desire you would convey it by one of your own domestics. Farewell.

Eporedia,* May the 24th.

LETTER XXIV.

[A. U. 710.]

FROM THE SAME TO CICERO.

ALL things here go on well; † and it shall be my endeavour to render them still better. Lepidus seems to be favourably disposed towards me; and indeed we have reason to divest ourselves of all our fears, and to act with undaunted freedom in defence of the commonwealth. But had our affairs a far less promising aspect; yet it might justly animate and augment that courage which I know al-

* A town not far from Vercellæ; from whence the last letter from Brutus was dated. See p. 89, note.

† “ Brutus having received, most probably, some fresh intelligence concerning Lepidus, wrote this letter to Cicero the day after he had written the former.”—*Mr Ross*.

ways resides in your breast, to reflect that we have three powerful armies * devoted to the service of the republic, and that fortune has already declared in our favour.

The report which I mentioned in my former letter is evidently calculated to intimidate you. But believe me, if you exert a proper spirit, the whole united party will be unable to withstand your eloquence.

I purpose, agreeably to what I told you in my last, to remain in Italy till I shall hear from you. Farewell.

Eporedia, May the 25th.

LETTER XXV.

[A. U. 710.]

TO PLANCUS.

THE news from your part of the world is so extremely variable and contradictory, that I am utterly at a loss what to write. Sometimes the accounts we receive of Lepidus are agreeable to our wishes, and at others entirely the reverse. All reports, however, concur in assuring us, that you are superior to every danger, either from fraud or force.

* That of Octavius, Plancus, and his own.

If you are, in some degree, indebted for the latter to fortune, it is certain, that the former, at least, is owing to your prudence alone.

I am informed, by a letter from your colleague,* dated the 15th of May, that you mentioned, in one of your expresses to him, that Lepidus had refused to receive Antony. We should have been more disposed to credit this intelligence, if you had taken notice of it in any of your dispatches to Rome. But, perhaps, you would not venture to communicate to us this piece of good news, as having been a little premature in an account of the same kind in your last. Every man, indeed, is liable to be deceived by his wishes; but all the world knows, that you can never be imposed upon by any other means. In the present instance, however, all possibility of farther error is removed; for *to stumble twice against the same stone*, is a disgrace, you know, even to a proverb. Should the truth prove agreeable, then, to what you mentioned in your letter to your colleague, all our fears are at an end; nevertheless, we shall not dismiss them, till we receive a confirmation of this account from your own hand.

I have often assured you of my firm persuasion, that the whole credit of delivering the commonwealth from this civil war, will devolve entirely

* Decimus Brutus.

upon that general who shall extinguish these its last surviving flames ; an honour which I hope and believe is reserved solely for yourself.

It is with great pleasure, though without the least surprise, that I find you entertain such grateful sentiments of my zeal in your service. Higher, indeed, it cannot possibly rise ; but you may depend upon my exerting it to more important purposes, if affairs in your part of the world should succeed as we wish. Farewell.

May the 29th.

LETTER XXVI.

[A. U. 710.]

LENTULUS* TO CICERO.

As I found, when I applied to Brutus in Macedonia, that he would not soon be prepared to march to the assistance of this province,† I determined to return hither, in order to collect what remained of

* He was the son of Publius Lentulus, to whom several letters in the first and second Books are addressed. He attended Trebonius into Asia Minor as his quæstor in that province, from whence the present letter was written.

† In order to quell the commotions which Dolabella had raised. See p. 70, note.

the public money, and to remit it, with all possible expedition, to Rome. In the interval, I received intelligence, that Dolabella's fleet appeared upon the coast of Lycia,* and that he had procured above an hundred transport-vessels, intending, if he should not succeed in his designs upon Syria,† to sail directly with his forces to Italy, and join the Antonys and the rest of those infamous rebels. I was so much alarmed at this account, that I thought proper to postpone all other affairs, and immediately proceed in quest of this fleet. And, notwithstanding my ships were unequal, both in number and size, to those of the enemy, I should probably have destroyed their whole fleet, if I had not been obstructed by the Rhodians; however, I have disabled the greatest part of it, and dispersed the rest. I have taken, likewise, every one of their transports, the soldiers and officers on board having quitted them upon the first notice of my approach. In a word, I have succeeded in the main of my design, having defeated a scheme which I greatly dreaded, and prevented Dolabella from strengthening our enemies by transporting his forces into Italy.

I refer you to the letter which I have written to

* It formed part of the province of Asia Minor. It is now called Aldinelli.

† See Vol. IV. p. 274, note.

the senate,* for an account of the ill-treatment I received from the Rhodians ; though indeed I have by no means represented it in its strongest colours. These people, in consequence of their imagining that the affairs of the commonwealth were utterly desperate, behaved towards me with the most insufferable insolence. But their affronts to my own person are in no sort the foundation of my complaints ; I have ever disregarded injuries of this kind, that centred entirely in myself. It is their disaffection to the republic, their attachment to the opposite party, their constant ill offices to all those who distinguish themselves in the support of our liberties, that I thought demanded my resentment. Let me not be understood, however, as passing an indiscriminate censure upon the whole island in general ; far am I, indeed, from thinking them all equally infected with the same principles. But I know not by what fatality it happens, that those very magistrates who refused to give protection to my father, to Lucius Lentulus, to Pompey, and to the rest of those illustrious chiefs who fled into this island after the battle of Pharsalia, are all of them, at this juncture, either actually in the administration themselves, or possess an unlimited influence over those who are. Accordingly, they have con-

* The foregoing letter.

ducted themselves in this affair with their usual malevolence ; and it is not only expedient, but indeed absolutely necessary, that the republic should interpose her authority, lest the insolence of this people should rise to still greater heights, by passing any longer unchastised.

Let me hope you will continue, as usual, to take my interests under your protection ; and that you will, upon all occasions, both in the senate and in every other instance, promote my honours with your suffrage. As the province of Asia is decreed to the consuls,* with a power of appointing whomsoever they shall think proper to administer the government till their arrival, I entreat you to employ your interest with them to confer this dignity upon me. The situation of affairs in this province does by no means require their presence before the expiration of their consular office, or in any sort render it necessary that they should send hither an army, for Dolabella is now in Syria ; and, agreeably to what you declared with your usual prophetic discernment, he will certainly be defeated by Cassius ere the consuls can possibly arrive. Accordingly, he has been obliged to aban-

* Hirtius and Pansa ; the news of whose death, together with that of the battles in which they fell, had not yet reached the knowledge of Lentulus.

don the siege of Antiochia, and has retreated to Laodicea, a sea-port town in Syria, as the only city in which he could confide. I hope he will soon meet with the fate he so well deserves; or rather, indeed, I am persuaded it has already attended him; for he has no other place to which he can retreat, and it is impossible he should make any long or effectual resistance against so powerful an army as that which Cassius has led against him.* I imagine, therefore, that Pansa and Hirtius will be in no haste to come into these provinces, but rather choose to finish their consular year at Rome. For this reason I am inclined to hope, that you may prevail with them to appoint me their substitute.

I have received assurances from both of them, as well in person as by letter, that no successor should be elected to my office during their consulate; and Pansa has lately repeated the same promise to my friend Verrius. Believe me, it is not from any ambitious views that I desire to be continued some time longer in this province; but as

* This shortly afterwards proved to be the fact; for Cassius having forced the city of Laodicea to surrender, Dolabella, in order to avoid falling into the hands of his enemy, put an end to his own life by the assistance of one of his slaves, whom he commanded to be his executioner.—*Fel. Paterc.* ii. 69.

I have met with many difficulties and disadvantages in the discharge of my functions, I should extremely regret the being obliged to resign my post before I shall have fully reaped the fruit of my labours. If it were in my power to remit to Rome the whole of those assessments I had actually levied, I should be so far from wishing to remain here, that I should desire to be recalled. But I am very solicitous to receive the money I advanced to Cassius, to replace what I lost by the death of Trebonius, and the oppressions of Dolabella ; as well as to recover the several sums which are due to me from those who have perfidiously broken the good faith they owed both to myself and to the republic. Now, these are points which I can by no means effect, unless the time of my continuance in this province be prolonged ; a privilege which I hope to obtain by the interposition of your usual good offices.

I persuade myself, that my services to the commonwealth give me just reason to expect, not the honour only of administering this province, but as high dignities as Cassius and the two Bruti ; as I not only shared with them in forming the design, and undergoing the hazard, of that ever-memorable enterprize against Cæsar, * but have exerted

* Plutarch, (as Manutius, in his remark upon this passage, observes,) taking notice, that several affected to be thought

myself with equal zeal and spirit in all our present commotions. I was the first, let me boast, that bid defiance to the oppressive laws of Antony; I was the first that brought over the cavalry of Dolabella to the interest of the republic, and delivered them into the hands of Cassius; I was the first who levied troops in defence of our common liberties, against the infamous attempts of those who have conspired our destruction; and it is owing entirely to me, that Syria, together with the army in that province, joined themselves under Cassius in the support of the republic. The truth is, if I had not very expeditiously contributed those large subsidies, both of men and money, with which I supplied Cassius, he would not have ventured to march into Syria; and the name of Dolabella would now have been no less formidable to the republic than that of Antony himself. Yet, at the same time that I acted thus warmly for the interest of the republic, I had every private bias that could draw me to the opposite party. Dolabella was my friend and companion, as the Antonys were my nearest

associates in the conspiracy against Cæsar, who, in truth, were in no way concerned in that affair, particularly mentions Lentulus as one in that number. But he paid dear for his boast; as it cost him his life when Octavius got into power.—*Plut. in vit. Cæsar.*

relations; and it was by the united good offices of the latter, that I obtained the quæstorship of this province. But the love of my country was superior to every other attachment; and I stood forth the first to declare war against the strongest and most endearing connections both of blood and friendship. Inconsiderable, it must be acknowledged, is the fruit which I have hitherto reaped from these instances of my patriotism. However, I do not despair; and I shall unweariedly persevere, not only in displaying my zeal for our liberties, but in exposing myself to every difficulty and every danger for their support. Nevertheless, I cannot but add, if I were to be encouraged by some of those honours I have merited from the senate, and from every friend to our country, they would give me an authority which would enable me to act with greater advantage to the common cause.

I did not see your son when I was with Brutus, as he was just gone into winter-quarters with the cavalry.* But I had the satisfaction of finding

* “ Brutus, when he first left Italy, sailed directly for Athens, where he spent some time in concerting measures how to make himself master of Greece and Macedonia; which was the great design that he had in view. Here he gathered about him all the young nobility and gentry of

that he was in general esteem ; which gave me great pleasure, not only on his account and yours, but likewise upon my own. For I cannot but consider a son of yours, that thus copies out his father's virtues, as standing in the relation to me of a brother. Farewell.

Perga, * May the 29th.

LETTER XXVII.

[A. U. 710.]

LENTULUS, PROQUÆSTOR AND PROPÆTOR, TO THE
CONSULS, THE PRÆTORS, THE TRIBUNES OF THE
PEOPLE, THE SENATE, AND THE COMMONS OF
ROME.

As soon as Dolabella had possessed himself of Asia,† by the most infamous and cruel act of

Rome, who, for the opportunity of their education, had been sent to this celebrated seat of learning ; but of them all, he took the most notice of young Cicero. He made him, therefore, one of his lieutenants, though he was but twenty years old ; gave him the command of his horse, and employed him in several commissions of great trust and importance ; in all which the young man distinguished both his courage and conduct."—*Life of Cic.* iii. 142.

* A city of Pamphylia, in Asia Minor, now called *Pirgi*.

† Asia Minor. See Vol. III. p. 215, note.

treachery,† I applied immediately to the army in Macedonia, under the command of the illustrious Marcus Brutus, as the nearest assistance to which I could have recourse, in order to recover this province as soon as possible to the dominion of the commonwealth. But Dolabella, being apprehensive of my design, advanced with so much rapidity, that he had got out of these territories before it was possible that the forces I had solicited could arrive. In his march, however, he laid the whole country waste, seized upon the public money, and not only plundered the Roman citizens of their effects, but most inhumanly sold them as slaves. I did not think it necessary, therefore, to defer my departure out of Macedonia, till the troops of Brutus should be ready. It appeared to be most for the advantage of the republic, that I should return with all expedition to the duties of my post, in order to levy the remainder of the public taxes; to collect the money I had deposited; to enquire what part of it had been seized, and by whose neglect; in a word, to transmit to you a full and faithful account of the state in which I should find the affairs of this province. With these views, I embarked; but as I was sailing among the Greek islands, I received intelligence, that Dolabella's fleet lay off the coast of Lycia, and

† See p. 70, note.

that the Rhodians had a considerable number of ships of war ready to sail. I resolved, therefore, to put back to Rhodes with the ships that attended me, and which were now joined by those under the command of Patiscus, the proquæstor; a person whom I must mention as most intimately united with me, not only by the ties of friendship, but by the same common sentiments towards the republic. I assured myself, that the Rhodians would give me assistance, in the first place, from their regard to the authority of your decree, by which Dolabella is declared an enemy to his country; and, in the next, as they stood engaged by a solemn treaty, renewed with us in the consulate of Marcus Marcellus and Servius Sulpicius, to consider the enemies of the republic in all respects as their own. But I was greatly deceived in my expectation; they were so far from being inclined to strengthen my fleet with any of their own ships, that they would not suffer it to enter their harbour. They even refused to furnish our soldiers with provisions and water; and it was with difficulty I obtained permission myself to sail into their port with two small vessels. However, I did not think proper to resent this insult upon the rights and the majesty of the Roman people; deeming it of more importance, in the present conjuncture, to frustrate the designs of Dolabella. For I had discovered, by some intercepted

letters, that it was his purpose, if he failed in his attempt upon Syria and Egypt, (as fail I was sure he must,) to proceed directly with his band of robbers and their plunder to Italy. Accordingly, in view to this his scheme, he had pressed out of the ports of Lycia a considerable number of transports, none of them less than fifty-six tons burden,* and these were strongly guarded by his fleet. Being greatly alarmed, therefore, conscript† fathers, at this dangerous design, I resolved to bear with the injurious treatment of the Rhodians, and to submit to every milder expedient of gaining them over to our interest. For this purpose, I suffered myself to be introduced into their senate in the manner they thought proper; where I represented, in the strongest terms I was capable, the danger to which the republic would be exposed, if that infamous rebel

* These vessels were much inferior to those employed for the same purposes in our service; the largest of which are of 300 tons, and the smallest of 100.

† This appellation was at first given as a mark of distinction to those particular senators, who were added by Tarquinius Priscus, or by the people at the settling of the commonwealth, to the hundred which originally composed the senate, as it was instituted by Romulus. But, in after times, it became a common title, which was promiscuously made use of in all addresses to that great council of the republic. *Vid. Manut. de Senat.*

should transport his forces into Italy. But I found them most perversely disposed to imagine, that the friends of the republic were the weaker party; that the general association in favour of our liberties was by no means voluntary; that the senate would still patiently suffer the insolence of Dolabella; and that no man would venture to vote him a public enemy. To be short, they were more inclined to believe the false reports that had been propagated by the disaffected than to credit my representations, though entirely agreeable to truth. In conformity with this disposition, they had sent, before my arrival in the island, two several embassies to Dolabella, notwithstanding his late assassination of Trebonius, and the many other flagitious acts which he committed in this province. And this they did by an unexampled violation of their laws, and contrary to the express prohibitions of the magistrates who were then in office. But whether this conduct was owing to their fears for the territories they possess on the continent, as they themselves allege, or whether it is to be imputed to the factious influence of a few of their principal magistrates, who formerly treated some of our illustrious countrymen with equal indignity, I know not. This, however, is certain, that I could not prevail with them to take any measures to obviate an evil, which it was very easy for them to prevent; and all the arguments I

could use, either with respect to my own personal danger, or in regard to that which threatened the republic, if this traitor, with his banditti, after being driven from Syria, should transport themselves into Italy, proved utterly ineffectual. It was even suspected, that the magistrates themselves amused us with various pretences of delay, till they could send intelligence to Dolabella's fleet of our approach. And, indeed, there were some circumstances, that greatly increased this suspicion; particularly, that Sextius Marius and Caius Titius, the lieutenants of Dolabella, suddenly quitted the fleet, and abandoned their transports, which had cost them so much time and pains to collect. Be that as it will, I pursued my voyage from Rhodes towards Lycia, and falling in with the enemy, I took all their transports, and have restored them to their owners. By these means, I have obstructed what I so much feared, and have removed all apprehensions of Dolabella's passing into Italy with his rascal crew. I chased the enemy as far as Sida, which is the utmost limit of my province; where I learnt, that part of them were separated, and that the rest had steered in company together towards Syria and the island of Cyprus. Having thus dispersed this squadron, and knowing that brave commander and excellent patriot, the illustrious Caius Cassius, had a

considerable fleet in those seas, I returned to the duties of my employment: and it shall be my endeavour, conscript fathers, to give both you and the republic full proofs of my indefatigable zeal. To this end, I shall exert my utmost assiduity in collecting the public revenues, which I shall transmit to you, together with all my accounts, as expeditiously as possible. If I should have time likewise to make a progress through the province, in order to enquire into the conduct of those with whom I entrusted the care of the finances, I shall not fail to send a list of such ~~who~~ shall appear to have been faithful to their trust, as well as of those who, by voluntarily betraying it, have rendered themselves partners in the guilt of Dolabella. Let me add, that if you shall think proper to chastise these last, according to their demerits, the execution of your justice will greatly strengthen my authority, and enable me with more facility to raise and preserve the remainder of the public taxes. In the mean while, the better to secure the public revenue, and to protect this province from future insults, I have formed (what, indeed, was extremely wanting,) a body of troops composed entirely of volunteers.

Since I wrote the above, about thirty Asiatic soldiers, who deserted from Dolabella in Syria, are arrived in Pamphylia. They relate, that Dolabella

appeared before the walls of Antiochia, in Syria, and finding that the inhabitants had shut the city gates against him, he made several attempts to enter by force; but was always repulsed with great disadvantage. At length, having lost about an hundred men, he retired in the night, and fled towards Laodicea, leaving all his sick and wounded behind him. They add, that the same night almost the whole of his Asiatic troops deserted; eight hundred of which returned to Antiochia, and surrendered themselves to the officers of the garrison, which Cassius had left in that town; the rest (of which number these soldiers are) came down into Cilicia, by mount Amanus. In fine, that Cassius, with his whole army, was reported to have been but four days march from Laodicea, when Dolabella retired towards that city. I am persuaded, therefore, that this most infamous villain will meet with the punishment he deserves much sooner than we expected.

LETTER XXVIII.

[A. U. 710.]

LEPIDUS, IMPERATOR AND SOVEREIGN PONTIFF,* TO
THE SENATE AND PEOPLE OF ROME.†

HEAVEN and earth will bear me witness, conscript fathers, that there is nothing I have at all times more sincerely desired than the preservation of our common liberties; and I should soon have convinced you of this truth, if fortune had not forced me to renounce those measures I purposed to pursue. My whole army, indeed, expressed

* The function of the Roman pontiffs was to give judgment in all causes relating to religion, and to regulate the festivals, sacrifices, and all other sacred institutions. The sovereign pontiff, or superintendant of these *pontifices*, was one of the most honourable offices in the commonwealth.

† This letter was written by Lepidus to the senate, in order to excuse the junction of his forces with those of Antony, which was effected the day before its date. But though he represents himself as merely passive in that transaction, and to have been forced into it by a general revolt of his troops, yet it most evidently appears to have been in consequence of a secret treaty which had been in agitation, during some months before, between him and Antony.

their usual tenderness towards their fellow-countrymen, by a mutinous opposition to my designs ; and, to own the truth, they absolutely compelled me not to refuse my protection to such a multitude of Roman citizens. I conjure you then, conscript fathers, to judge of this affair, not by the suggestions of private resentment, but by the interest of the commonwealth: nor let it be imputed as a crime to me and my army, that, amidst our civil dissensions, we yielded to the dictates of compassion and humanity. Be assured, that by acting with an equal regard to the safety and honour of all parties, you will best consult both your own and your country's advantage. . Farewell.

From my camp at Pons Argenteus,
May the 30th.

LETTERS
OF
MARCUS TULLIUS CICERO
TO
SEVERAL OF HIS FRIENDS.

BOOK FIFTEENTH.

LETTER I.

[A. U. 710.]

TO PLANCUS.

THOUGH I am too well assured of the disposition of your heart to require any formal declarations of your gratitude, yet I cannot but confess, that I received your acknowledgments with great pleasure, as they afforded me the most evident proof of the affection you bear me. I was always, indeed, perfectly sensible of your friendship; but it never appeared to me in a stronger or more advantageous light.

Your letter to the senate was extremely well received, not only from the important account it brought us of your wise and heroic measures, but as it was greatly admired likewise for the strength and elegance of its composition. Let it be your earnest labour, my dear Plancus, to extinguish the remains of this war, which if you should happily effect, you will acquire the most consummate credit and reputation. I wish all possible prosperity to the republic; yet, believe me, spent as I am with my utmost efforts to preserve it from destruction, I am scarce more solicitous for the liberties of my country, than for the glory of my friend. I hope, that the immortal gods have placed within your power a most favourable opportunity of increasing your fame; and let me entreat you to embrace it, my dear Plancus, in the full persuasion, that whoever shall destroy Antony, will have the honour of terminating this most execrable and alarming war. Farewell.

LETTER II.

[A. U. 710.]

ASINIUS POLLIO* TO CICERO.

It is owing to Lepidus, who detained my couriers above a week, that I did not receive earlier advice of the several actions near Mutina; though, indeed, I should be glad to have been the last that was informed of this unhappy news, if it were utterly out of my power to be of any assistance in redressing its consequences. I wish the senate had ordered me into Italy, when they sent for Plancus and Lepidus; for if I had been present, the republic would not have received this cruel wound. And though some, perhaps, may rejoice in this event, from the great number of principal officers and veteran soldiers of the Cæsarian party who have perished, yet they will undoubtedly find reason to lament it, when they shall be sensible of the terrible desolation it has brought upon their country. For if what is related concerning the number of the slain be in any degree true, the flower and strength of our armies are entirely cut off.

I was well aware of the great advantage it would

* See pp. 1. 3. notes.

have proved to the republic, if I could have joined Lepidus; as I should have been able, especially with the assistance of Plancus, to have dissipated those doubts which occasioned his delay in declaring for the senate. But the letters which I received from him being written (as you will perceive by the copies I herewith transmit,) in the same spirit with those speeches which, it is said, he made to his army at Narbo,* I found it necessary to act with some sort of artifice towards him, if I hoped to obtain leave to march my troops through his province. I was apprehensive, likewise, if an engagement should happen before I could execute my designs, that the known friendship I had with Antony (though not superior, indeed, to that which Plancus entertained for him) would give my enemies an occasion of misrepresenting my intentions. For these reasons, I dispatched two couriers from Gades,† in the month of April, by two different ships, with letters, not only to you and to Octavius, but to the consuls also, requesting to be informed in what manner my services might most avail the republic. But if I am right in my calculation, these ships did not sail till the very day on which the battle was fought between Pansa and Antony, as

* Narbonne, in Provence.

† Cadiz.

that was the soonest, I think, since the winter, that these seas were navigable. To these reasons for not marching, I must add, that I had so little apprehension of this civil war, that I settled the winter quarters of my troops in the very remotest parts of Lusitania.* Both armies, it should seem, were as eager to come to an action, as if their greatest fears on each side were, lest some less destructive expedient might be found of composing our disturbances. However, if circumstances required so much precipitation, I must do Hirtius the justice to acknowledge, that he conducted himself with all the skill and courage of a consummate general.

I am informed, by my letters from that part of Gaul which is under the command of Lepidus, that Pansa's whole army is cut to pieces; and that he himself is since dead of his wounds. They add, that the *martial* legion is entirely destroyed; and that Lucius Fabatus, Caius Peducæus, and Decimus Carfulenus, are among the number of the slain. My intelligence farther assures me, that in the subsequent attack by Hirtius, both he and Antony lost all their legions; that the fourth legion, after having taken Antony's camp, was engaged and defeated by the fifth with terrible slaughter; that Hirtius, together with Pontius Aquila, and, as it is reported, Octavius

* Portugal.

likewise, were killed in the action. If this should prove true, (which the gods forbid !) I shall be very greatly concerned. My advices farther import, that Antony has, with great disgrace, abandoned the siege of Mutina ; however, that he has ***† complete regiments of horse still remaining, together with one which belongs to Publius Bagienus, as also a considerable number of disarmed soldiers ; that Ventidius has joined him with the seventh, the eighth, and the ninth legions ; and that Antony has determined, if there should be no hopes of gaining Lepidus, to have recourse to the last expedient, and arm not only the provincials, but even the slaves. In fine, that Lucius Antonius, after having plundered the city of Parma, has posted himself upon the Alps. If these several particulars are true, there is no time to be lost ; and every man who wishes that the republic, or even the name of the Roman people, may subsist, should immediately, without waiting for the express orders of the senate, contribute his utmost assistance to extinguish these dreadful flames. I hear that Decimus Brutus is at the head of only seventeen cohorts, together with two incomplete legions of new raised troops, which had been levied by Antony. I doubt not, however, that the remains of the forces commanded by Hir-

† The number is omitted in the MSS.

tius will join him; I hope so, at least, as there is little, I think, to be expected from any new recruits that may be raised, especially since nothing can be more dangerous than to give Antony time to recover strength.

My next letters from Italy will determine the plan of my operations; and as the corn is now cut down, and partly carried in, I shall be more at liberty to execute them without obstruction from the season of the year. In the mean time, let me assure you, that I will neither desert nor survive * the republic. It is a misfortune, however, that my distance from the scene of action is so great, and the roads so infested, that it is often six weeks, and sometimes more, ere I can be informed of any event that has happened. Farewell.

* Notwithstanding Póllio's pious resolutions of expiring with the republic, he was contented to live on, long after its total destruction, and died in a good old age in the court and favour of Augustus. It was not many months, indeed, from the date of this letter, that he united with the enemies of his country, by joining his troops with those of Antony and Lepidus.—*Auct. Dial. de Caus. Corrupt. Eloquent.*

LETTER III

[A. U. 710.]

DECIMUS BRUTUS TO CICERO,

It affords me some consolation, in the midst of my great concern,* that the world is at length convinced, that my fears were not without just foundation.† I have sent, by this express, a full account of the whole affair to the senate. And now let them deliberate, if they please, whether they shall call home their troops from Africa and Sardinia, whether they shall send for Marcus Brutus, and whether they shall order the payment of my forces. But of this you may be well assured, that unless they act, with regard to these several articles, in the manner I have pointed out in my letter, we shall all of us be exposed to the utmost danger.

I entreat you to be extremely cautious whom the

* Occasioned by the treachery of Lepidus, in having deserted the cause of the republic, and joined himself to Antony. This letter appears to have been written a few days after that event; being dated the 3d of June, and the junction between the two armies of Lepidus and Antony having been effected on the 29th of May.

† See the 11th Letter of the preceding Book, p. 73, to which this seems to allude.

senate shall employ to conduct the troops that are to reinforce me ; as it is a trust which requires great fidelity and expedition. Farewell.

From my camp, June 8d.

LETTER IV.

[A. U. 710.]

TO DECIMUS BRUTUS.*

MAY every god confound that most infamous of all human beings, the execrable Segulius ! For do you imagine, my friend, that he has told this idle tale to none but Cæsar, or to you ? Be assured, he has related it to every mortal that would give him the hearing. I am much obliged to you, however, for informing me of this contemptible report ; as it is a very strong instance, my dear Brutus, of the share you allow me in your friendship.

As to what he mentioned concerning the complaints of the veterans, that you and Cæsar are left out of the commission for dividing the lands, I sincerely wish I had, likewise, been excluded from so

* This letter is an answer to the 23d of the foregoing Book ; and was written before any of the letters which give an account of Antony's being received by Lepidus had come to Cicero's hands.

troublesome an office. But it is by no means to be imputed to me, that you were not both nominated; on the contrary, I moved, that all our generals should be included. But the clamours of those who always endeavoured to obstruct your honours, carried it against me; and you were both excepted, in opposition to my warmest efforts. Unheeded then by me, let Segulius propagate his impotent calumnies! For all that the man means is nothing more than to repair his broken fortunes. Not that he can be charged with having dissipated his patrimony; for patrimony he never had. He has only squandered in luxury what he acquired by infamy.

You may be perfectly at ease, my dear and excellent Brutus, with regard to those fears which you so generously entertain upon my account, at the same time that you feel none, you tell me, upon your own. Be assured, I shall expose myself to no dangers which prudence can prevent; and as to those against which no precaution can avail, I am little solicitous. High, indeed, would my presumption be, were I to desire to be privileged beyond the common lot of human nature.

The advice you give me, not to suffer my fears to lead me into greater dangers than those they would avoid, supplies me at once with a proof both of your judgment and your friendship; but the

caution is altogether unnecessary. The truth of it is, distinguished as you are by a fortitude of mind, which renders you incapable of fear upon any occasion; yet there is no man who approaches nearer to you in that quality than myself. Nevertheless, I shall always be upon my guard, though I shall never be afraid. Indeed, if I should have any reason, will it not be wholly owing, my dear Brutus, to yourself? For were I of a disposition apt to take alarm, yet I should be perfectly composed, in the confidence of that protection I shall receive from your approaching consulate; especially as the world is no less sensible than I am of the singular share I enjoy of your affection.

I agree entirely with your opinion concerning the four legions, as also, that both you and Cæsar should have the distribution of those estates you mention. This is an office on which some of my colleagues had cast a very wishful eye; however, I have disappointed their longing, by reserving it wholly for you and Cæsar. In the mean time, if any occurrence should arise that requires particular secrecy, I shall observe your directions, and communicate it to you by one of my own domestics.—Farewell.

June the 4th.

LETTER V.

[A. U. 710.]

PLANCUS TO CICERO.

I SHALL never regret to undergo the greatest dangers in the cause of my country, provided, my dear Cicero, that whatever happens to myself, I may not justly be accused of temerity. But I should not scruple to confess, that I had been guilty of an imprudence, if I had ever acted in reliance upon the sincerity of Lepidus. Too easy a disposition to give credit to fair pretences, cannot so properly be called a fault as an error; but an error into which the noblest minds are generally most liable to fall. It was not, however, from a mistake of this nature, that I had lately well-nigh been deceived; for the character of Lepidus I perfectly well knew. It was entirely owing to a certain sensibility of what my detractors might say; a quality, I will freely acknowledge, particularly prejudicial in the affair of war. I was apprehensive, if I remained in my camp, that those who are inclined to misconstrue my actions, might represent me as the occasion of the war being protracted, by obstinately indulging my resentment against Lepidus; and therefore I advanced almost within sight of him and Antony.

I encamped, indeed, at no greater distance from them than forty miles, that I might be able, as circumstances should require, either speedily to join the army of Lepidus, or safely to retreat with my own. In marking out my camp, I chose a spot of ground that gave me the advantage of having a large river in my front, which would take up some time in passing, and that lay contiguous, likewise, to the country of the Vocontii; * who, I was sure, would favour my retreat. When Lepidus found himself disappointed of what he so much wished, and that there were no hopes of my approaching nearer, he immediately threw off the mask; and on the 29th of May he joined Antony. The combined armies moved the same day, in order to invest my camp; and they had actually advanced within twenty miles, before I received advice of their junction. However, I struck my tents with so much expedition, that, by the favour of the gods, I had the happiness to escape them. My retreat was conducted with so much good order, that no part of my baggage, nor even a single man, was either left behind or intercepted by these incensed villains. On the 4th of this month I repassed the Isara with my whole army; after which I broke down the bridge I had thrown across that river. I

* A people of Narbonensian Gaul.

took this precaution, that my troops might have time to refresh themselves, as well as to give my colleague* an opportunity of coming up to me; which I imagine he will be able to effect in three days from the date of this letter.

I must always acknowledge the zeal and fidelity which Laterensis has shown to the republic, in his negociations between Lepidus and myself; but it is certain, that his great partiality towards Lepidus, prevented him from discerning the dangers into which I have been led. However, as soon as he discovered how grossly he had been imposed upon, he attempted to turn that sword against his own breast, which, with much more justice, had been plunged in the heart of Lepidus. But he was prevented from completing his purpose; and it is said, (though I by no means mention it as a certainty,) that the wound he has given himself is not mortal.†

My escape from these traitors has proved an extreme mortification to them; as they marched to attack me with the same unrelenting fury which instigates them against their country. Some late cir-

* Decimus Brutus.

† It proved otherwise; and the senate, in honour of his patriotism, not only decreed him a public funeral, but ordered a statue to be erected to his memory.—*Dis.* p. 324.

circumstances particularly contributed to inflame their resentment. I had frequently and warmly urged Lepidus to extinguish this civil war; I had disapproved of the conferences that were holden with the enemy; I had refused to see the lieutenants whom Antony deputed to me under the passports of Lepidus; and had intercepted Catus Vestinus, whom the former had sent express to the latter. But it is with pleasure I reflect, that the more earnestly they wished to get me into their hands, the more they suffer in the disappointment. . . .

Continue, my dear Cicero, to employ the same vigorous efforts you have hitherto exerted, that we who are in arms, for the defence of the republic, may have suitable honours paid to our services. In the mean time, I wish that Cæsar would join us with those brave troops he commands; or, if his affairs will not permit him, that, at least, they might be sent under the conduct of some other general; for most certainly his own personal interest is at stake.* The whole force of the disaffected party is united against our country; and shall we not put forth our utmost strength in its defence?

* Octavius was, at this time, secretly carrying on a treaty with Lepidus and Antony, which shortly after ended in an alliance, which every reader is acquainted with, under the name of the *Triumvirate*.

As for what concerns myself, I will venture to assure you, that if you, at Rome, are not wanting on your parts, I will abundantly perform every thing that can be expected on mine.

The obligations I am continually receiving from your hands, endear you to me every day more and more; at the same time, that they animate me to act in such a manner as not to forfeit, in any degree, your esteem and affection.

I will only add my wishes, that I were able in person to give you such proofs of my gratitude, as might afford you greater reason to rejoice in the good offices you have conferred upon me. Farewell.

Cularo, on the frontiers of the Allobroges,*

June the 6th.

LETTER VI.

[A. U. 710.]

TO DECIMUS BRUTUS.

To tell you the truth,† I was once inclined to be somewhat angry at the shortness of your letters;

* A people of the Narbonensian Gaul, in which Cularo, now called Grenoble, was situated.

† When Cicero wrote this letter, which is an answer to

but I am now so well reconciled to your concise manner, that I condemn my own as downright loquacity, and shall make your epistles the models of mine. How short, yet how expressive are you when you tell me, that "all things go well with you, and that you shall endeavour to render them still better; that Lepidus seems favourably disposed; and that we have every thing to expect from our three armies!"* Were I ever so full of fears, these significant sentences would banish them all. But I exert the spirit you recommend; and indeed, if, at the time when you were closely blocked up in Mutina, my hopes, nevertheless, were fixed entirely upon you, how much higher, think you, must they be raised now?

I should be glad, my dear Brutus, to resign to you my post of *observation*, if I might do so without incurring the censure of deserting it. As to what you mentioned, of continuing in Italy till you should hear from me, I do not disapprove of it, if the motions of the enemy should not call you elsewhere; as there are many points upon the carpet at Rome, which may render it prudent for you not to remove to a farther distance. But, at all events,

the 24th of the preceding Book, p. 108, he had not yet received the news of Antony's junction with Lepidus.

* Those of Decimus Brutus, Plancus, and Octavius.

if your presence here may prove a mean of terminating the war, it is undoubtedly the first and principal scheme you should have in view.

The senate has decreed the first money that could be raised for the payment of your troops. Servius is extremely your friend; and you may always depend upon me. Farewell.

June the 8th.

LETTER VII.

[A. U. 710.]

ASINIUS POLLIO TO CICERO.

BALBUS,* my quæstor, has withdrawn from Gades, with very considerable effects in his hands, which he had received of the public taxes, † consisting of a large quantity of uncoined gold, a much larger of silver, ‡ together with a great sum of ready money;

* He was nephew to Lucius Cornelius Balbus, the great friend and favourite of Cæsar, and of whom frequent mention has been made in the preceding letters.

† The quæstor was receiver-general of the provincial taxes.

‡ The province of Spain abounded in valuable mines of every sort, particularly in those of silver and gold; the proprietors of which paid a certain proportion to the go-

and what adds to his iniquity, is, that he has not discharged even the pay of the troops.* In his flight, he was detained three days by contrary winds at Calpe;† from whence, however, he sailed on the 1st of this month, and has transported himself, with his treasure, into the dominions of Bogud, king of Mauritania. ‡ But whether the present prevailing reports§ will bring him back to Gades, or carry him to Rome, I know not; for I hear that his resolutions vary with every different express that arrives. But, besides the robberies and the extortions he has committed in this province, and

vernment of the pure ore which these mines produced.—*Strab. iii. Burman. de vectigal. P. R. dissert. p. 107.*

* The payment of the forces was a part of the business belonging to the provincial quæstors.

† Gibraltar.

‡ One of the most considerable kingdoms in ancient Africa, comprehending those of Fez and Morocco, together with part of Algiers and Billedulgerid. Bogud, the prince of this country, had, in the late civil wars, favoured and assisted Cæsar, by whom he had been greatly distinguished; as he afterwards supported Antony in the war between him and Octavius. It is probable, therefore, that Balbus withdrew with these treasures, not in order to convert them to his private use, but to employ them in the cause of Antony.—*Hirt. de Bel. Alex. 59. de Bel. Afric. 25.*

§ Concerning the junction of Lepidas with Antony.

the cruelties he has exercised towards our allies, he affected, in several instances, to imitate (as he himself used to boast) the actions of Cæsar. Accordingly, on the last day of the games which he exhibited at Gades, he presented Herennius Gallus, a comedian, with the golden ring, and conducted him to one of the 14 benches of the theatre, which he had appropriated to those of the equestrian order. He likewise continued himself in the supreme magistracy of Gades, by his own single authority; and at two immediately successive assemblies of the people, he nominated, for the two next following years, such of his creatures whom he thought proper to succeed him in the government of that city. He also recalled from exile, not, indeed, those unfortunate men who were banished on account of the present commotions, but those infamous rebels who were concerned in the sedition which was raised in Gades, during the proconsulate of Sextus Varrus,* and in which all the members of their council were either assassinated or expelled. Thus far he had Cæsar for his model; but, in the instances I am going to mention, he exceeded even Cæsar himself. He caused a play to be acted at the public games, upon the subject of his embassy

* It does not appear who this person was, nor at what time he presided as governor of Spain.

to Lucius Lentulus,* the proconsul; and the good man was so affected with the remembrance of those transactions, which the scenes of this drama recalled to his mind, that he melted into tears. At the gladiatorial games, he gave a specimen of his cruelty with regard to one Fadius, who had served in Pompey's army. This man had twice, it seems, voluntarily entered the lists in combats of this kind; but, upon the present occasion, he refused to fight, though peremptorily required by Balbus, and accordingly threw himself upon the protection of the populace. But the mob having pelted Balbus with stones, when he attempted to recover him out of their hands, he let loose upon them a party of

* He was consul in the year 704, when the civil war broke out, in which he took part with Pompey. He accompanied that general in his retreat to Brundisium, and from thence passed over with him into Greece. But, before Lentulus left Italy, Balbus was employed by Cæsar (as *Manutius* observes) to prevail with him to return to Rome.—Balbus afterwards (as appears by a passage which the same commentator cites from *Paterculus*) executed a much more difficult commission of this kind at the siege of *Dyrrachium*, where he undertook to carry some farther overtures from Cæsar to Lentulus, who was in that garrison, and which he executed with equal address and intrepidity. It was this adventure, it is probable, that formed the subject of the play which *Pollio* here mentions.—*Ad Att.* viii. 11. *Vel. Paterc.* ii. 51.

his Gallic horse: Balbus having, by these means, got the unfortunate Fadius into his possession, ordered him to be fixed in a pit, which was dug for that purpose, in the place where the games were exhibited, and caused him, in this manner, to be burnt alive. This was performed soon after Balbus had dined,* who was present during the whole execution, walking about bare-footed, with his hands behind him, and his tunic loose, in the most unconcerned and indecent manner; and while the unhappy sufferer cried out that he was a Roman citizen, “ Why do you not run now (said the insulting and relentless Balbus) to implore the pro-

* There seems to have been some peculiar indecorum in this circumstance, though it is not very easy to determine wherein it precisely consisted. It may be, that public executions, at this time of the day, were thought indecent: it is certain, at least, that it was deemed improper to hold courts of judicature for the trial of criminal matters in an afternoon. For Plutarch takes notice, that the younger Cato was accused of this practice during his prætorship; and thinks it necessary, for the credit of that illustrious Roman, to deny the truth of the charge; or, perhaps Pollio might point out this circumstance as a mark of uncommon cruelty of disposition in Balbus, who could rise from table with a temper of mind so different from that which pleasures of this sort are naturally apt to inspire, and turn from a cheerful meal to a scene of the utmost horror and barbarity.—*Plut. in vit. Caton Uticen.*

“tection of the people?” But this was not the single cruelty he exercised: he exposed, likewise, several Roman citizens to wild beasts; particularly a certain noted auctioneer in the city of Hispalis;* and this for no other reason but because the poor man was excessively deformed. Such is the monster with whom I had the misfortune to be connected! But more of him when we meet. In the mean time, (to turn to a point of much greater importance,) I should be glad the senate would determine in what manner they would have me act. I am at the head of three brave legions, one of which Antony took great pains to draw over to his interest at the commencement of the war. For this purpose he caused it to be signified to them, that the very first day they should enter into his camp, every soldier should receive five hundred denarii;† besides which, he also assured them, that if he obtained the victory, they should receive an equal share of the spoils with his own troops; a reward which all the world knows would have been without end or measure. These promises made a deep impression upon them; and it was with great difficulty I kept them from deserting. I should not, indeed, have been able to have effected this, if I had not cantoned them in distant quarters; as some

* The city of Seville, in Spain.

† About 141. sterling.

of the cohorts, notwithstanding they were thus separated, had the insolence to mutiny. Antony endeavoured likewise to gain the rest of the legions, by immense offers. Nor was Lepidus less importunate with me to send him the thirtieth legion, which he solicited both by his own letters, and by those which he caused Antony to write. The senate will do me the justice, therefore, to believe, as no advantages could tempt me to sell my troops, nor any dangers which I had reason to apprehend, if Antony and Lepidus should prove conquerors, could prevail with me to diminish their number, that I was thus tenacious of my army for no other purpose but to employ it in the service of the republic.* And let the readiness with which I have obeyed all the orders I received from the senate, be a proof that I would have complied in the same manner with every other they should have thought proper to have sent me. I have preserved the tranquillity of this province; I have maintained my authority over the army; and have never once moved beyond the limits of my own jurisdiction. I must add likewise, that I have never employed any soldier, either of my own troops, or those of my auxiliaries, in carrying any dispatches whatsoever; and I have constantly punished such of my caval-

* See p. 135, note.

ry whom I have found at any time attempting to desert. I shall think these cares sufficiently rewarded in seeing the peace and security of the republic restored. But if the majority of the senate and the commonwealth, indeed, in general, had known me for what I am, I should have been able to have rendered them much more important services.

I have sent you a copy of the letter which I wrote to Balbus, just before he left this province; and if you have any curiosity to read his play, which I mentioned above, it is in the hands of my friend Gallus Cornelius, to whom you may apply for it, Farewell.

Corduba, June the 8th.

LETTER VIII.

[A. U. 710.]

TO PLANCUS.

ALL our hopes are entirely fixed (and fixed too with the approbation of the gods themselves) upon you and your colleague.* The perfect unanimity, therefore, that appears, by your several letters to the senate, to subsist between you, affords great sa-

* Decimus Brutus.

tisfaction, not only to that assembly in particular, but to the whole city in general.

As to what you wrote to me concerning the commission for dividing the lands, if that affair had been brought before the senate, I should have been the first to have proposed the most honourable decree in your favour. But the slowness of their deliberations, in the business which was then under their consideration, together with other obstructions which attended their debates, having prevented them from coming to any resolution, both your brother and myself were of opinion, that it was most adviseable to proceed upon the former decree; and I take it for granted, that he has acquainted you to whom it is owing that it was not drawn up in the manner we proposed. But if, in this instance, or in any other, your inclinations should not be entirely gratified, be well persuaded, however, that you are in such high esteem with all the friends of the republic, that there is no sort of honours they are not disposed to confer upon you. I wait with great impatience for an express from you, as I expect it will bring us the news I most wish. Farewell.

LETTER IX.

[A. U. 710.]

TO CORNIFICIUS.*

Is it really so, my friend; and have I never written to you but when I had occasion to recommend the cause of some litigious suitor? I confess, I have frequently troubled you with letters of this kind; but must you not thank your own obliging partiality towards me, if the world is persuaded, that no recommendation has so much weight with you as mine? Tell me, however, when did I omit writing, if your family gave me notice of an opportunity? In fact, nothing affords me greater satisfaction, now that I cannot converse with you in person, than this intercourse of letters. I only lament, that my public occupations prevent me from corresponding with you as frequently as I wish. If I had more leisure, indeed, I should not only provoke you to enter with me into a commerce of this epistolary kind, but I should challenge you with whole volumes of my works; a challenge which I ought to have received from you, as your engagements, I imagine, are not altogether so numerous as mine. But if I am

* See Vol. IV. p. 135, note.

mistaken in this supposition, how shall I acquit you of being a little unreasonable, in expecting frequent letters on my part, when you have so seldom leisure to send me any on yours? If I have hitherto been engaged in the most important occupations, as holding myself bound to exert all my cares in the defence of the republic, I may still more strongly urge that plea at present: for as a relapse is always more dangerous than a first attack, so the rekindling of this war, after it was almost totally extinguished, demands a double portion of my labour and vigilance. But, not to enter farther into this subject, believe me, my dear Cornificius, I should think myself most inexcusably indolent, not to say ill-mannered, were I capable of suffering you to gain the superiority over me, in any instance of friendship. That I enjoy yours, is a point of which I never once had the least doubt: but the conversation I have lately had with Cherippus, has rendered it still more evident. As agreeable as he always was to my taste, I could not but look upon him, in his last visit, with more than ordinary pleasure, as he not only acquainted me with the sentiments of your heart, in the message he delivered to me, but, as he represented, at the same time, a lively image of your very air and countenance. You had no reason, then, to be apprehensive that I should be displeased at your ha-

ving sent me the same common letter which you addressed to all your friends in general. If I desired a more particular memorial, it was merely from the affection of my heart, and by no means as a point upon which I insisted.

The loss of both our consuls,* together with the incredible scarcity of money in the treasury, puts it out of my power to ease you of your great and continual expence in your military preparations. We are trying all expedients in order to raise supplies for discharging those donatives we promised to the troops that behaved well; and I imagine that we shall at last be obliged to have recourse to a tax.†

I am persuaded there is no truth in the report concerning Attius Dionysius; as Stratorius has not mentioned a word to me upon that subject. With regard to Publius Lucceius, be well persuaded that his interest is no less my concern than it is yours; for, indeed, he is extremely my friend. I could

* Hirtius and Pansa.

† “ This was a sort of capitation tax, proportioned to each man’s substance, but had wholly been disused in Rome from the conquest of Macedonia by Paulus Æmilius, which furnished money and rents sufficient to ease the city ever after of that burden, till the necessity of the present times obliged them to renew it.” *Val. Max.* iv. 3. *Life of Cic.* iii. p. 249.

not, however, prevail with the managers of the auction to adjourn the sale; their engagements and their oath oblige them, they assure me, to the contrary. I would by all means, therefore, advise him to hasten into Italy; and if the summons I sent him some time since had any weight, he will be at Rome when you read this letter. As to the affairs you mention, and particularly the money, I find you were not apprised of Pansa's death when you wrote your letter, by the hopes you express that, through my interest, he would comply with your request: and most undoubtedly he would, had he been living; for he held you in great esteem. But as he is dead, I do not see that any thing can now be done in this matter.

I approve, in general, of your measures with respect to Venullius, Latinus, and Horatius; and particularly, that you have deprived them of their lictors. But I am not altogether so well pleased, that, in order to render this circumstance the less uneasy to them, you have taken away these attendants, likewise, from your own lieutenant. Those who deserve the highest honours, ought not to have been thus levelled with a set of men, who certainly merit the utmost disgrace: and if they will not depart from your province, in obedience to the decree of the senate, I think you should use compulsory methods for that purpose.

I have nothing farther to add in answer to your last letter, (of which I received a duplicate,) but that I hope you will be persuaded, your credit and reputation are no less sacred to me than my own.* Farewell.

LETTER X.

[A. U. 710.]

TO DECIMUS BRUTUS.

THOUGH I always receive your letters with the highest satisfaction, yet I am much better pleased that you employed your colleague Plancus to make an excuse to me, than if you had interrupted your very important occupations by writing yourself. He has executed your commission very fully; and nothing can render your character more truly amiable to me, than the account he gives of your zeal and diligence.

The junction of your forces with those of Plan-

* This letter closes the correspondence between Cicero and Cornificius. The latter, not long afterwards, lost his life, in bravely defending his province against the troops of Sextius, who claimed it in the name of Octavius, by virtue of the general division of the Roman dominions that had been agreed upon between the triumvirs. *Appian. de B. G.* p. 620.

cus, and the harmony with which you act together, as appears by your common letter to the senate, was extremely agreeable, both to that assembly, and to the people in general. What remains then, my dear Brutus, but to conjure you to persevere in the same unanimity, and to endeavour, I will not say to excel others, but (what is far worthier of your ambition,) to rise above yourself. I need add no more; especially as I am writing to one whose epistolary conciseness I purpose to imitate.

I wait, with impatience, for your next dispatches; as I imagine they will bring us such accounts as are agreeable to our wishes. Farewell.

LETTER XI.

[A. U. 710.]

TO FURNIUS.*

WHEN your letter assured me that it was absolutely necessary either to slight Narbonensian Gaul,† or to attack the enemy with great disadvantage, I was glad to find that the former had been chosen; as I much more dreaded the consequences of coming to an engagement upon unequal terms. What

* See p. 101, note.

† In which province were the combined armies of Antony and Lepidus.

you mentioned, likewise, concerning the harmony between Plancus and Brutus, afforded me great pleasure; for it is a circumstance upon which I found my principal hopes of our success.

Notwithstanding you modestly refer it to time to inform me to whom we owe that general zeal which appears in your province, * be assured it is a point of which I am already perfectly well apprised. I could not, therefore, but read the latter part of your letter, which, in all other respects, was extremely agreeable to me, with some concern. You there tell me, that if the election for ædiles is fixed for the month of August, you will soon be at Rome; but if it is already over, you will be there much sooner: "for wherefore," you ask, "should you weakly continue to hazard your life, without the prospect of any recompence?" O! my friend, is it possible that you, who judge so well concerning the interests of others, should be thus a stranger to your own? But, as I am sensible of the strong impulse of your heart towards true glory, I cannot believe that these are its genuine sentiments: at least, if they be, I must condemn my own judgement, as well as yours, for being so greatly deceived in your character. Shall the ambition of

* Transalpine Gaul, in which province Furnius was lieutenant to Plancus.

anticipating a slight and common honour, (for so I must call the office you have in view, if obtained in the manner by which so many others have risen to it before you,) induce you to withdraw from a theatre where you are acting with such universal and well-merited applause? Shall it be a question with you, whether to offer yourself as a candidate now, or at the next election for prætors? and is it none, how you shall deserve every illustrious distinction which the commonwealth can bestow? Are you a stranger to the exalted reputation you have acquired? Or do you consider it as of no value, thus to rise in the esteem of your country? If you are ignorant, indeed, of the high credit in which you stand with the public, it is an ignorance for which we, who are your friends, are undoubtedly to be blamed. But if you already know it, tell me, my Furnius, can any prætorship afford you a satisfaction superior to what you feel in discharging the duty you owe to your country, and in reaping immortal glory? an acquisition which, though few, indeed, endeavour to deserve, yet every man, most certainly, wishes to enjoy. Calvisius, who is much your friend, and a man of great judgment also, frequently joins with me in complaining of you upon this article. However, since you are so desirous to attain this office, I shall endeavour that the election may be deferred till the month of

January; as this adjournment will, upon many accounts, I think, prove for the advantage, likewise, of the republic. Farewell; and may victory attend you!

LETTER XII.

[A. U. 710.]

TO CAIUS CASSIUS.

I IMAGINE you are informed, by the public journals, which, I know, are duly transmitted to you, of the infamous conduct of that most light and inconstant man, your relation Lepidus.* We are again, therefore, involved in a war, which we flattered ourselves was entirely over; and all our hopes are now placed upon Decimus† and Plancus; or, to speak more truly, indeed, upon Brutus‡ and upon you: for it is from you two that we expect, not only a present assistance, in case any misfortune (which the gods avert!) should attend our arms, but a firm and lasting re-establishment of our liberties.

* Lepidus and Cassius were married to the two sisters of Marcus Brutus.

† Brutus.

‡ Marcus.

The reports in regard to Dolabella,* are, in all respects, agreeable to our wishes, excepting only that they want confirmation. In the mean time, be assured, that the opinion and expectations of the world concerning you, are such as evidently shew, that they look upon you as a truly great man. Let this animate you to the noblest achievements; in the full persuasion, that there is nothing so considerable which your country does not hope to obtain by your courage and conduct. Farewell.

LETTER XIII.

[A. U. 710.]

TO THE SAME.

I TAKE example from the conciseness of your letters to shorten mine; though, to say truth, nothing occurs at present that can tempt me to lengthen them: for, as to *our* transactions, I well know you are acquainted with them by the public journals; and we are perfectly ignorant of every thing that concerns yours. One would imagine, indeed, that all communication were cut off between us and Asia; for we have received no intelligence from thence, excepting only some uncertain, though,

* That he was defeated by Cassius.

indeed, repeated rumours in relation to the defeat of Dolabella.

We imagined that the flames of this civil war were entirely extinguished; but, in the midst of this pleasing persuasion, we were suddenly and greatly alarmed by the conduct of your relation Lepidus. Be assured, therefore, that the hopes of the republic are wholly fixed upon you and your army. We have, it is true, a very powerful body of troops in this part of the world; nevertheless, your presence here is extremely necessary, to give our affairs all the success we wish. I will not say that we have no hopes of recovering our liberties; but I must say our hopes are small: such as they are, however, they are entirely founded upon your future consulate.* Farewell.

LETTER XIV.

[A. U. 710.]

CASSIUS,† QUÆSTOR, TO CICERO.

THE preservation of the republic, by the victory we have lately obtained, gives me inexpressible

* Cassius and Brutus were prætors the last year; and the laws entitled a man to sue for the consulate two years after he had served the office of prætor.

† It is altogether uncertain whether the author of this

joy; as the honours that have been paid my friend,* afford me, likewise, a very sensible pleasure. I cannot sufficiently indulge my admiration, when I consider you as thus rising above yourself in glory; and that the consular† should shine forth even with more lustre than the consul. Some uncommon pri-

letter was Lucius Cassius, the brother of Cains Cassius, or another Cassius, distinguished by the addition of Parmensis, from Parma, the place of his nativity. There is nothing, indeed, in the history of these two Cassii, or in the letter itself, that can render it more reasonable to suppose it to have been written by the one father than the other; for they were both in the number of the conspirators against Cæsar, and both afterwards acted with Brutus and Cassius in Asia. This epistle appears to have been written from the island of Cyprus, soon after the news of Antony's defeat at the battle of Mutina had reached that part of the world. *Cassaubon. ad Suet. Jul. 80. Appian. B. C. p. 671.*

* This seems to allude to the honours that were paid to Cicero by the populace, upon the news that Antony had been forced to abandon the siege of Mutina. "The whole body of the people (to give the relation of this fact in the words of Dr Middleton) assembled about Cicero's house, and carried him in a kind of triumph to the Capitol; where, on their return, they placed him in the rostra, to give them an account of the victory, and then conducted him home with infinite acclamations." *Phil. xiv. 5. Life of Cic. iii. 197.*

† Those who had passed through the office of consul were styled consulars.

vilage of fate most certainly attends your patriot virtues; as we have often, I am sure, experienced. How else should your single eloquence be of more avail than the arms of all our generals? You have a second time, indeed, rescued the well-nigh vanquished republic from the hands of our enemies, and once more restored her to us again. From this period, therefore, I date the return of our liberties; and I shall now be honoured with the public applause of the most distinguished of patriots. Yes, my friend, you will now declare, (what you promised to conceal till the recovery of our freedom should render it to my advantage to be known,) you will now declare to the whole world those instances you received of my tender attachment, both to you and to the republic, during the dark and dangerous season of our servitude. I am much less solicitous, however, that you should publish my praises, than that you should be persuaded I deserve them: and I had rather stand approved by your silent judgment, than, without that internal verdict in my favour, to enjoy, by your recommendation, the good opinion of the whole world. It is my great ambition, indeed, that you should esteem my late conduct to have been, not the effect of a sudden and irregular impulse, but the natural result of the same uniform principles of which you have been a witness: in a word, that you should think

of me, as of one from whom the republic has so much to expect, as may well justify every honour to which I shall be advanced. I am sensible, my dear Cicero, that your own family, as they are well worthy of the relation they bear to you, deserve your first and most tender regard: but those, surely, have a right to the next place in your affection, who endeavour to imitate your patriot virtues; and I shall be glad to find, that their number is considerable. I imagine, however, that it is not so great as to exclude me from a share in your good offices, and prevent you from procuring any public distinctions in my favour, which shall be agreeable to your inclination and your judgment. That I am not unworthy of them, with respect to the disposition of my heart, I have already, perhaps, sufficiently convinced you: and, as to my talents, whatever they may be, the general oppression under which our country so long laboured, would not suffer them to appear in their full advantage.

I drew together, out of the ports of this Asiatic province, and of the neighbouring islands, all the ships of war I could possibly collect; and, considering the great opposition I met with from the several cities, I manned them with tolerable expedition. With this fleet I pursued that of Dolabella, commanded by Lucilius; who, after having frequently made a show of coming over to me, but

still, however, continuing to retreat, sailed, at length, into the port of Corycus,* where he blocked himself up. I did not think proper to follow him thither; not only as judging it most advisable to join our land forces, but as Turulius, the quæstor, lay behind me with a squadron which Tullius Cimber fitted out the last year from Bythinia. I put in, therefore, at Cyprus; from whence I take this first opportunity of acquainting you with the intelligence I have here received. I am to inform you, then, that the city of Laodicea, (in pursuance of the example of our faithless allies the Tarsenses,† though, indeed, with a greater degree of folly,) have voluntarily called in Dolabella: from those two cities he has composed an army (as far as numbers can make an army) of Greek soldiers, and is encamped before Laodicea; having thrown down part of the walls, in order to join his camp with the town. On the other hand, Cassius‡ is encamped about twenty miles distant from him at Paltos. His army consists of ten legions, and twenty auxiliary cohorts, together with four thousand horse. He imagines that he shall be able to oblige the enemy to surrender, without hazarding a battle; as wheat is so scarce in Dolabella's camp, that it is sold for

* In Cilicia.

† The citizens of Tarsus.

‡ Caius Cassius.

twelve drachmæ. The enemy must necessarily, indeed, be destroyed by famine, if they are not soon supplied by the ships that belong to Laodicea. This, however, we shall with great ease prevent; for, besides the three squadrons under Turulius, Patiscus, and myself, Cassius has a considerable fleet in these seas, commanded by Sextilius Rufus. Let me encourage you, then, to hope, that we shall soon vindicate our liberties with the same success* in this part of the world, as has attended your army in Italy. Farewell.

Cromyæsis, in Cyprus, June the 13th.

LETTER XV.

[A. U. 710.]

TO DECIMUS BRUTUS.

I WAS expecting, every day, to hear from you, when our friend Lupus gave me notice that he was just setting out to you, and desired to know if I had any thing to write. But though I have nothing worth communicating, more than what you are furnished with by the public journals, and that you are no friend, I am told, to letters of mere empty form, yet I cannot forbear following your example,

* See p. 115, note.

and sending you two or three short words. Be assured, then, that all our hopes rest upon you and your colleague.* As to Brutus,† I am not able to give you any certain account of him: I can only say, that, in pursuance of your advice, I endeavour to persuade him, in all my letters, to come over into Italy, and to take a part in this general war.‡ I much wish he were now here; as his presence would render me less apprehensive of the consequences of these intestine commotions§ which pre-

* Plancus.

† Marcus Brutus.

‡ The conduct of Marcus Brutus, as far as can be judged of it at this great distance, appears altogether unaccountable. Before the battle of Mutina, he had drawn down all his forces to the coast, in order to embark for Italy, if any accident should make his assistance necessary. But, upon the news of Antony's defeat, he retired to the remotest parts of Greece and Macedonia, to oppose the attempts of Dolabella; and from that time (as Dr Middleton observes) seemed deaf to the call of the senate, and to all Cicero's letters, which urged him so strongly to come to their relief. But had Brutus and Cassius (as the same ingenious historian remarks) marched with their armies towards Italy, at the time when Cicero first pressed it, before the desertion of Plancus and the death of Decimus, it seems reasonable to believe, that the immediate ruin of the republic might have been prevented.—*Life of Cic.* iii. 247.

§ The disturbances to which Cicero alludes, were probably those that were occasioned by the violent measures

vail in Rome; and which are by no means, indeed, inconsiderable.—But I forget that I proposed to imitate your laconic brevity, and am running on in a second page. Farewell then, and may success attend your arms! *

June 18th.

of Octavius in order to obtain the consulate. See p. 181, note.

* Decimus Brutus, soon after the date of this letter, was most treacherously deserted by Plancus; who drew off his troops from those of his colleague, and went over with them to the camp of Antony and Lepidus. “Decimus Brutus being thus abandoned, and left to shift for himself, with a needy mutinous army, eager to desert, and ready to give him up to his enemies, had no other way to save himself than by flying to Marcus Brutus in Macedonia. But the distance was so great, and the country so guarded, that he was often forced to change his road for fear of being taken; till, having dismissed all his attendants, and wandered for some time alone in disguise and distress, he committed himself to the protection of an old acquaintance and host, whom he had formerly obliged; where, either through treachery or accident, he was surprised by Antony’s soldiers, who immediately killed him, and returned with his head to their general.”—*Fel. Paterc.* ii. 64. *App.* iii. 588. *Val. Max.* ix. 13. *Life of Cic.* iii. 242.

LETTER XVI.

[A. U. 710.]

TO CAIUS CASSIUS.

YOUR relation and my friend, the *worthy* Lepidus, together with all his adherents, were, by an unanimous decree of the senate, which passed on the 30th of June last, declared public enemies to their country: but, at the same time, a full pardon was offered to such as shall return to their allegiance before the 1st of September. The senate acts with great spirit; but it is the expectation of being supported by your army, that chiefly animates them in their vigorous measures. I fear, indeed, that we shall have occasion for all your assistance; as the war is now become extremely formidable by the villainy of Lepidus.

The accounts which daily arrive concerning Dolabella are altogether agreeable to our wishes; but, at present, they are nothing more than mere rumours. However, your letter addressed to the senate, dated from the camp on the 9th of May, has raised a general persuasion in Rome, that he is actually defeated. Accordingly, it is imagined, that you are now upon your march into Italy, with a view, on the one hand, of succouring us with

your troops, if any of those accidents, so common in war, should have rendered our arms unsuccessful; or, on the other hand, of assisting us with your counsels and authority, in case we should have proved victorious. You may be assured, in the mean while, that no endeavours of mine shall be wanting to procure the forces under your command all possible honours. However, I must wait a proper season for this purpose, when it shall be known how far they have availed, or are likely to avail, the republic. At present, we have only heard of their endeavours in the cause of liberty; and glorious, it must be acknowledged, their endeavours have been. But still some positive services are expected; and these expectations, I dare be confident, either already are, or soon will be, perfectly answered. No man, indeed, possesses a more patriot or heroic spirit than yourself; and it is for this reason that we wish to see you in Italy as soon as possible. The fact is, if you and Brutus were here, we should look upon the republic as restored.

If Lepidus had not received Antony, weak and defenceless as he was, when he fled after the battle of Mutina, we should have obtained a complete victory. This infamous step, therefore, has rendered him far more odious in Rome even than Antony himself ever was; for Antony raised a war at

a time when the republic was in the utmost ferment; whereas Lepidus has kindled the flames in the midst of peace and victory. We have the consuls elect* to lead our armies against him; but though we greatly depend upon their courage and conduct, still, however, the uncertain event of war leaves us much to fear. Be assured, therefore, that our principal reliance is upon you and Brutus, whom we hope soon to see in Italy; and Brutus, indeed, we expect every day. Should we have defeated our enemies, as I hope we shall before your arrival, the authority, nevertheless, of two such illustrious citizens, will be of infinite service in raising up the republic, and fixing it upon some tolerable basis. All our business, indeed, will by no means be over, notwithstanding we should be delivered from the infamous designs of our enemies; as there are many other disorders, of a different kind, which it will be still necessary to redress. Farewell.

* Decimus Brutus and Plancus.

LETTER XVII.

[A. U. 710.]

TO AMPIUS.*

YOUR family has informed you, I imagine, of my zealous labours to procure your restoration, as I have the pleasure to be assured that they are abundantly satisfied with my services.—Uncommon, indeed, as the affection is which they every one of them bear towards you, yet I cannot allow that they are more sincerely desirous of your welfare than myself: I am sure, at least, their power of assisting you, in this conjuncture, is by no means equal to mine. I have employed it, and shall continue to employ it, for your benefit; and I have already gained a very considerable point, which will much contribute to facilitate your return. In the mean while, preserve a firm and manly spirit, and be well persuaded that my good offices shall not be wanting to you upon any occasion. Farewell.

* In some MSS. the superscription of this letter is to Appius, and in others to Ampius Balbus. The time when this letter was written is no less uncertain than the person to whom it is addressed.

LETTER XVIII.

[A. U. 710.]

PLANCUS, CONSUL-ELECT, TO CICERO.

I CANNOT forbear to express, upon every occasion, the sentiments I entertain of your repeated favours; though, at the same time, it is with some reserve that I indulge myself in this satisfaction. The great intimacy, indeed, which you allow me to enjoy with you, renders all formal acknowledgements of this kind unnecessary; nor would I make so cheap a return to the many important obligations I owe to you, as that of mere empty professions. I had much rather reserve the proofs of my gratitude to some future opportunity of testifying it in person; and, if I live, I will convince you, by the assiduity of my good offices, and by every instance of respect and esteem, that you have not a friend, nor even a relation, who is so warmly attached to you as myself. In the mean time, I am at a loss to determine, whether the daily pleasure I receive, or the lasting honour I shall derive from your affectionate regard, be greater.

I find the interest of my troops has been a part of your care. It was not with any intention of advancing my own power, that I was desirous they

should be distinguished by the senate, as I am conscious of having no views but what regard the welfare of the republic. My reasons were, in the first place, because I thought they deserved to be rewarded; and, in the next place, because I was desirous they might, upon all occasions, be still more attached to the commonwealth. I hoped, likewise, by these means, so strongly to fortify them against all solicitations, that I might be answerable for their continuing to act with the same unshaken fidelity which they have hitherto preserved.

I have kept entirely upon the defensive; and, though I am well apprised with how much just impatience the public wishes for a decisive action, yet I persuade myself that the senate will approve my conduct. If any misfortune, indeed, should attend our armies in this part of the world, the republic would not very soon be in a condition to oppose any sudden incursion of these rapacious traitors. As to the state of our forces, I imagine you already know that those under my command consist of three veteran legions, together with one new-raised regiment, which last, however, is composed of far the best disciplined troops I ever saw of this sort. Brutus* is at the head of ten legions,

* Decimus.

one of which is veteran, another has been upon the establishment about two years, and all the rest are lately raised. Thus you see, though our army is very numerous, it is not extremely strong. The republic, indeed, has but too often had occasion to be convinced, how little is to be expected from raw and inexperienced forces. However, if we had been joined either by the African legions,* which are composed wholly of veteran troops, or by Cæsar's,† we should, without hesitation, have hazarded a general engagement. As the troops of the latter were somewhat nearer than the former, I frequently pressed Cæsar, by letters, to advance; and he accordingly promised to join us with all expedition: but other views, I perceive, have diverted him from these intentions. Nevertheless, I have dispatched my lieutenant, Furnius, with another letter to him, if happily it may any thing avail. You are sensible, my dear Cicero, that I take an equal part with you in the affection you bear to Octavius.—He has a right to my friend-

* These legions composed part of that army with which Julius Cæsar defeated Scipio in Africa, from whence they had lately been recalled by the senate. But, soon after their landing, they were corrupted by the other soldiers, and, deserting the senate, they joined themselves to Octavius. *Life of Cic.* iii. 241.

† Octavius.

ship, not only from that intimacy which I enjoyed with his uncle,* but, in regard also to his own disposition, which, as far as I could ever discover, is regulated by principles of great moderation and humanity. It would ill, indeed, become that distinguished amity, which subsisted between Julius Cæsar and myself, not to look upon Octavius with all the tenderness which is due to the son of my friend, after he has been adopted as such by Cæsar's will, and that adoption approved by the senate. What I am going to say, therefore, is more the dictates of concern than resentment; but, it must be acknowledged, that if Antony still lives, if he has been joined by Lepidus, if their armies are by no means contemptible; in a word, all their hopes and all their attempts are singly owing to Cæsar.† Not to look farther back than to his promise of joining me; had he fulfilled the assurances he gave me for that purpose, the war would, by this time, either have been totally at an end, or driven into Spain, where the enemy could not have carried it on without great disadvantage, as that province is utterly averse to them. I am at a loss to conceive, therefore, with what view, or by whose advice, Cæsar was diverted from a measure so greatly to

* Julius Cæsar.

† See p. 59, note.

his interest and his honour, in order to turn his pursuits towards a consulship of a few months duration : * much to the terror, at the same time, of the republic, † and with pretensions, too, exceedingly ridiculous. ‡ The remonstrances of his friends might be extremely serviceable upon this occasion, both to himself and to the commonwealth : but none of them, I am persuaded, would have so much influence over him as yours ; § as there is no man

* To the end of the current year ; of which there remained about five or six months unexpired when Octavius was declared consul.

† Octavius advanced towards Rome at the head of several legions, in order to demand the consulate ; which threw the city into the utmost consternation and disorder.—*Dio.* p. 319. *Appian.* p. 585, 586.

‡ Perhaps the absurdity to which Plancus here alluded, was, that Octavius, who was but a youth of twenty, and consequently who wanted above twenty years of the age prescribed by the laws for being qualified to sue for the consular office, should entertain so extravagant a thought as to aspire to the supreme magistracy.

§ Plancus chose a very improper man to dissuade Octavius from pursuing his design upon the consulate, when he fixed upon Cicero as the most likely person to prevail with him for that purpose. It appears, indeed, that Octavius had artfully ensnared Cicero to enter into his views, by persuading him that he was desirous of having him for his colleague in the consular office, and promising to leave the sole administration of it to Cicero's superior wisdom and expe-

who is so much obliged to you except myself; for I shall ever acknowledge that the favours I have

rience. The bait was too well adapted to his vanity and ambition to be thrown out in vain; and Cicero undertook the management of this affair upon the terms proposed.—Plutarch, Appian, and Dion Cassius, all concur in giving testimony to the truth of this fact; but, as it is a fact which proves that Cicero was by no means, at this juncture, acting the part of a patriot, the polite apologist of his conduct has endeavoured to discredit the evidence of these historians. To this end, Dr Middleton produces the following passage from the letters to Brutus, as an incontestible proof,—“that no man was more shocked at Octavius’s attempt, or took more pains to dissuade it, than Cicero.”—

“*Cæsarem—improbissimis litteris quidam fallacibusque nunciis impulerunt in spem certissimam consulatus. Quod simulatque sensi, neque ego illum-absentem litteris monere destiti, nec accusare præsentis ejus necessarios, qui ejus cupiditati suffragari videbantur; nec in senatu, sceleratissimorum consiliorum fontes apperire dubitavi.*”—Epist. ad Brut. 10. Now, there seems to be the strongest reason to question either the authenticity or the veracity of this letter; because it is most certain, from one of Cicero’s Philippics, that he actually did favour the earliest possible promotion of Octavius to the consulate.—“*Quid est enim P. C. (says he) cur eam (Octavium) non quam primum amplissimos honores capere cupiamus? Legibus enim annalibus cum grandiore ætate ad consulatum constituebant, adolescentiæ temeritatem verebantur. C. Cæsar ineunte ætate docuit ab excellenti eximique virtute, progressum ætatis expectari non oportere. In hoc spes libertatis posita est; ab hoc accepta jam salus, huic*

received from you are great and innumerable. I have given instructions to Furnius to solicit Cæsar

summi honores et exquiruntur et parati sunt."—Phil. v. 17, 18. Could Cicero, after this, without being guilty of the wildest and the weakest inconsistency, "admonish Octavius, by letter, against his designs upon the consulship; reproach those to their face, who encouraged him in that ambitious view; and lay open the source of these traitorous counsels in the senate;" (all which the epistle in question affirms that he did;) when he had, himself, in the speech and in the passage above cited, said every thing that his wit and eloquence could suggest in favour of Octavius's premature advancement to the consular office? Either the letters, then, to Brutus are not genuine; or Cicero, to serve a present purpose, pretended that he had acted a part which he did not. The former of these suppositions is maintained by some very learned and judicious critics; and the latter will by no means be thought improbable, if there is any weight in the several instances of the same kind which have been occasionally produced in the course of these notes.—But whichever of these alternatives be the fact, it equally concludes in support of that historical evidence for which I have been contending. In farther confirmation of which, it may be observed, that Plutarch cites the authority of Octavius himself, for what he affirms concerning the private agreement between Octavius and Cicero in regard to the consulate. And it is probable he took this piece of secret history from those memoirs which Octavius wrote of his own life; as it is certain, that both Plutarch and Appian made great use of them in compiling their histories. *Plut. in vit. Cic. Appian. p. 578, 579. 385. Dio. p. 519.*

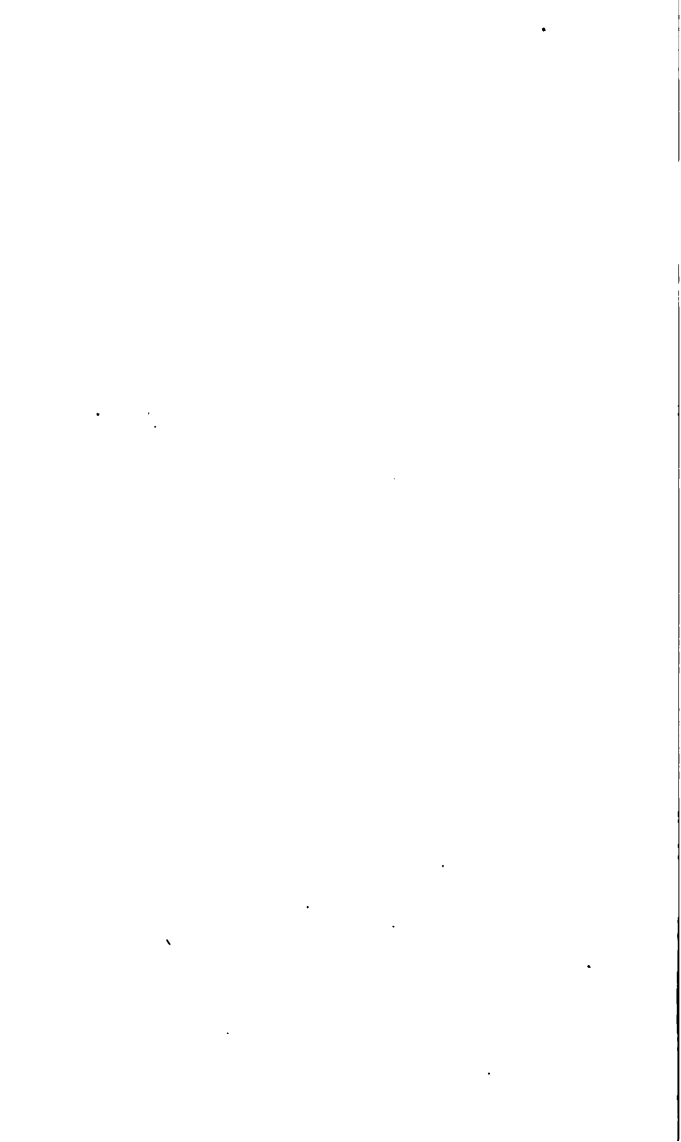
upon this subject; and if I should have that authority with him, which I am sure I ought, he will hereafter thank me for my advice. In the mean time, we have a very difficult part to sustain here; as, on the one hand, we do not think ourselves altogether strong enough to hazard an engagement; and, on the other, must take care not to expose the republic to greater dangers by declining one. However, if Cæsar could comply with the dictates of his interest and his honour, or if the African legions should speedily join us, you may depend upon having nothing to fear from this quarter.—Let me entreat you to continue your friendship to me, and to be assured that I am entirely yours. * Farewell.

From my camp, July the 28th.

Middlet. on the epist. to Brut. p. 134. rem. 8. Tunstall's observ. on the epist. to Brut. p. 222. et Suet. in Aug. 85.

* Plancus, soon after the date of this letter, abandoned his colleague Decimus Brutus, and went over with his troops to Antony and Lepidus. See p. 172, note. About four months, likewise, from the time when this letter was written, the celebrated coalition was formed between Cæsar, Antony, and Lepidus; in consequence of which, Cicero, it is well known, was sacrificed to Antony's resentment. In the last moments of his life he behaved with great composure; and it is the only circumstance in all his misfortunes that he

bore with a becoming fortitude. He had, indeed, so much the less reason to complain of his fate, as it is certain that he suffered nothing more than he would have inflicted, had fortune put Antony into his power. "*Omnium adversorum,*" says Livy, "*nihil ut viro dignum erat, tulit, præter mortem: quæ, vere æstimanti, minus indigne videri potuit, quod a victore inimico nihil crudelius passurus erat, quàm quod ejusdem fortunæ compos ipse fecisset.*"—Liv. fragm. apud Senec. Suasor. 6. This is the judgment which the noblest and most impartial of the Roman historians has passed upon Cicero; and the truth of it is abundantly confirmed by the foregoing letters.



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